

LAYMEN'S

WORK

In This Issue :

- EUROPEAN LAYMEN MEET
- WORLD-WIDE STEWARDSHIP
- TRANSITION : ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE



WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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EDITORIAL

It may be detrimental to the wider introduction of this bulletin that its second issue is already somewhat specialised. The Steering Committee of the European Laymen's Conference have, however, asked me to devote this number mainly to the Bad Boll Conference. I have accepted this request with pleasure. The Conference was indeed a unique occasion, where Laymen's Work in Europe was reflected and focused in both its power and its weakness. To speak of it in this way already implies sitting in judgment. Though probably everybody would agree that both power and weakness are to be found in the manifold activities covered loosely by the term of "Laymen's Work" in Europe, there would be no agreement as to the right assessment of success and failure. The short survey on press reactions to the Conference which is included in this number makes this already quite clear. I have nevertheless tried in the first place to give a fair account of what happened at Bad Boll; naturally it may be that I am, as one of the organisers, not a strictly impartial observer. Moreover, I was asked by the Steering Committee not to exclude my own evaluation of the Conference and its printed material. Such judgments of a personal nature cannot commit either the World Council of Churches or the leaders and members of the Conference. They are only intended to stimulate the reader to join in the study of the problems presented by Laymen's Work as we know it on the Continent. As an editor of an ecumenical bulletin, I apologise to non-European readers for the fact that this second number is even more noticeably centred on Europe than the first. I hope they will react so strongly that one of the next issues can be based on their contributions.

The response evoked by the first number is satisfactory. But in the course of time this Bulletin should be of service to many more readers than have so far subscribed to it. For obvious reasons, the next number, like all the following, can only be sent to subscribers, with the exception of institutes and groups with which we have a regular arrangement for the exchange of periodicals. With two issues per annum, subscription should present no financial difficulty. In exceptional cases, subscription without payment will be made possible.

If I were a real editor, I ought to take much more care in obtaining information about facts which might be relevant to Laymen's Work. Since I am a Secretary serving on the staff of three departments I must fall back on the old Donatists' saying that nobody can give more than he has got himself. It is not only lack of space which compels us to brevity in the categories "Items on Laymen's Work" and "Calendar": it is also lack of information. All those who would like to co-operate in Laymen's Work on an Ecumenical basis are urgently asked to inform the editor of this bulletin about everything in their own field which might be of interest for others doing the same kind of work. Such details should be forwarded not by individual groups directly but if possible through the channels of the national organisations.

H. H. W.

THE EUROPEAN LAYMEN'S CONFERENCE

HOW DID A EUROPEAN LAYMEN'S CONFERENCE COME ABOUT ?

It was during the Second World War, in the countries governed and occupied by the total State, that the seeds were sown of what we now term lay work in Europe. Not that there had not been earlier on too vigorous lay movements and zealous lay organisations, or that these did not exist outside the regions directly touched by Nazism and occupation. But in these countries, in those years of trial, many things there had been before suddenly gave way, and several things there still were outside the areas thus oppressed, seemed unreal. An integral part of the structure that gave way was, in many cases, not only the moral code of unwritten but accepted decency, but belief in the image of God that had been presented in the home or in the confirmation class. Not only ecclesiastical organisation in the mass but, frequently, the local church was among the things that failed to stand the test. It was then that there began to be a demand for concrete fellowship that would bear up the life of the individual, and bound up with that demand was the desire for a united recognition of God's will for life in the world, and of the obligations that that entailed. And it was then also that there began to be contact with people who in their earlier days had not counted themselves as part of the Church, but with whom, in this inestimable climate of mutual human trust, it was possible to enter now into frank discussion. A new sense of personal and corporate responsibility for both the Church and the Nation was born in the minds of many laymen.

This first more or less pre-natal stage was succeeded, after the collapse of authoritarian rule and the laying-down of arms, by the stage of setting to work. Here and there, groups would meet, and conferences be arranged, and institutes be founded. The point of this work together was to study questions arising from the individual's day-to-day professional and family life, and the social, political and eventually even the great ideological questions of our time. It was endeavoured to look at all these things in the light of the Gospel, which, people were positive, illuminated the whole world and not merely the Church. Thus they studied the Bible together, and were staggered by its realism and contemporary relevance. All this went on not as part of a large-scale plan, but as a series of concrete responses to situations as they arose. They did not even know about one another. One great service performed by the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey was that it gathered together for the first time, in the spring of 1947, leaders in this work from various different areas. Everybody who was there was, and still is, filled with amazement to see to what an extent this was a gathering of fellow-workers, who had been, without knowing it, engaged for years on what was to all intents and purposes the same work, and who very quickly found themselves at one in their appraisal of the situation prevailing in the Church and the world today. Their concern was now to maintain contact and to work in harmony.

This concern was taken up by the Ecumenical Institute. Mlle de Diétrich issued, as No. III of the *Cahiers de Bossey*, an account in summary form of the

various lay movements at that stage. The Institute repeated the meeting regularly every year, though those attending differed from year to year. New groups were started in the meantime along similar lines. Side by side with this work, however, it was important to make contact with people who had some of them been doing laymen's work for many decades, against a different background and subject to different requirements. This had to be done in connection with the various countries of Europe; it had to be done at the ecumenical level in connection with such very important organisations as the Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., whose representatives were on the Board of the Ecumenical Institute; it had, particularly, to be done in connection with the American churches, in which a considerably higher percentage of laymen had always been active in the life of the parish than was the case in most European churches.

The World Assembly in Amsterdam in 1948 definitely established that the question of the layman, both in the Church and as representative of the Church in the secularised life of the modern world, is of pressing significance. It was on that occasion also that the plan was drawn up for a Laymen's Conference under ecumenical auspices. This development led to the appointment of a Secretary for Laymen's Work on the staff of the World Council in Geneva, who was to anchor laymen's work more firmly than before to the rest of the ecumenical campaign, and hence to collaborate with the Study and Inter-Church Aid Departments of the World Council as well as with the Ecumenical Institute. At the same time he was to extend in breadth and depth the existing contacts between lay groups and institutes, and under the guidance of the Institute's Director to prepare the forthcoming Laymen's Conference.

The European Laymen's Conference took place from July 18 to 27 of this year. It is to a considerable extent representative of what was and what was not achieved in this second phase of development, and it will, unless we are very much mistaken, close that phase and thus give place to further development. For all who took part it was a time of inspiration and warm fellowship. Its results will be shown by a fresh vigour and drive in the efforts of laymen to find God's will for them in the life of the World and of the Church. Whether these results are visible will depend on what the individual men and women who were at Bad Boll *do* following the Conference.

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE CONFERENCE ?

Composition and Organisation

In all, 220 regular participants met in Bad Boll, near Stuttgart, where the first Evangelical Academy in Germany was started. For purposes of organisation they were divided into delegates, observers, visitors, speakers and staff. It is of some importance to note that they came from 20 different countries and belonged to 12 confessional traditions. 33 of them were clergy and theologians, and 17 others employed full-time on church work. Professional statistics for the remainder were as follows :

Teaching professions	25
Administration, public and private	15
Writers, journalists, publishers	15

Industry and commerce	12
Lawyers	11
Engineers and practical scientists	11
University professors	8
Social workers.	7
Housewives	7
Doctors and pharmacists	6
Military.	5
Trade Unionists	4
Various	5
Students	16
Staff	24

These figures include in all 57 women.

The conference itself rightly deplored the fact that scarcely any working men and no farmers were present. This may to some extent be due to the structure of the lay movements; a number of other external and technical reasons are, however, also behind it. It is, in addition, in those countries where the lay movements have especially good contacts with the workers' organisations that full-time church workers are employed on a considerable scale.

The preparation and organisation of the European Laymen's Conference was the responsibility of the Ecumenical Institute's Director. Immediately assisting him were his colleagues from the Institute, including the Secretary for Laymen's Work from the World Council. The programme had been suggested by conferences of leaders from lay movements and groups, and adopted by an official ecumenical Preparatory Committee. This latter met in Bossey for a few days in November 1950 and again in April 1951.

Invitations were sent out, as indicated by the World Council's Central Committee, by the Director of the Ecumenical Institute. In so doing, however, he confined himself exclusively to the nominations made by representatives of the lay movements in the various countries, by agreement with the leaders of their churches. Requests for nominations went to all the churches of Europe, or to their lay movements. From certain countries no answer was received.

The directing of the conference itself was in the hands of a Steering Committee which met daily in Bad Boll. Its members were: Prof. Hendrik Kraemer, Chairman; Mr. Bernard Causton, World Council of Churches; M^{lle} Suzanne de Diétrich, Ecumenical Institute; M^{lle} Claire Jullien, France; Dr. Heinz Kloppeburg, Germany; Dr. Lothar Kreyssig, Germany; Mr. John W. Lawrence, Great Britain; Dr. Eberhard Müller, Bad Boll; Mr. Frank Northam, World Council of Churches; Dr. Hans Hermann Walz, General Secretary. The leaders of the study groups and the leaders of the Bible groups also held regular meetings among themselves. A special tribute must be paid to those who worked in the general office, the Press office, the organisation, and the interpretation and translation service.

The travelling and accommodation expenses of the delegates were, with very few exceptions, settled within the individual national delegations. General expenses were covered exclusively by special donations made for this purpose. Particular thanks are due to the Disciples of Christ in America, the Religious Affairs Branch of the American High Commission in Germany, the External Affairs Office of the Evangelical Church in Germany, the Established Church of

Württemberg and the Evangelical Academy of Bad Boll, as well as to a number of private individuals in Britain, Holland, Germany and Switzerland.

The conference owed its atmosphere of joint labour and of Sunday repose to the hospitality of the Evangelical Academy in Boll, and of the heads of the Moravian Brethren there. The accommodation, despite initial objections, proved entirely suited to the taking of such a large gathering.

Delegates were privileged to welcome as visitors, for an hour or two or a day or two at a time, such men as President Martin Niemöller, Dr. Reinold von Thadden, chairman of the German Evangelical Kirchentag, Bishop Martin Haug, head of the Established Church of Württemberg, his predecessor Bishop Theophil Wurm, now retired, and Herr Hermann Ehlers, Chairman of the West German Federal Assembly, some of whom addressed the conference. Warm and inspiring letters, which the conference gratefully acknowledged, were received from H.M. the Queen of the Netherlands and from Dr. Theodor Heuss, President of the German Federal Republic.

Services and Devotions

The conference opened on the morning of July 18 with a service of worship. The General Secretary of the World Council, Dr. Visser 't Hooft, officiated, using a form in accordance with the liturgy of the Church of Scotland (Reformed), and the sermon was preached by Oberkirchenrat Kloppenburg. Half-way through the conference, on Sunday, July 22, there was a service in the neighbouring village church for both conference members and the local parish of Boll, taken by Prälat Hartenstein according to the Württemberg Lutheran rite and followed by the celebration of Holy Communion. On July 27 the conference closed with a Methodist-style service of thanksgiving and dedication, taken by an English business-man, Mr. Northam, a Swiss doctor, Dr. Tournier, and the Secretary for Laymen's Work. These services, together with the liturgical worship every morning, the silent prayer of intercession at midday and the free evening benediction by different delegates, either ordained clergy or laymen, formed the inner framework of these ten days spent together. Especially impressive to many of those present was the Holy Liturgy of the Greek Orthodox Church, celebrated one day by Archimandrite Carabinis in place of the usual morning devotions.

Although various delegates found and continued to find certain particular patterns of religious life in Bad Boll strange to them, in general it may be said (and this was confirmed by the findings of the study group on worship) that the lay movements of today stand not in such-and-such a *relation* — of approval or rejection — to the worship of the Church, but actually *within* that worship. The new open-mindedness towards the world which in many cases characterises them, and the vigorous criticism of ossified aspects of the Church's life, do not involve a displacement of interests away from the centre of the Christian faith: on the contrary, they are based upon a new grasp of that centre. This involves not only the personal devoutness of the individual, but a new emphasis — new, at least, in relation to previous decades — on the share to be taken in praise and thanksgiving, in the confession of sins and in intercession, by the Christian communion.

From an ecumenical standpoint, the lay movements are of course today faced with a problem which did not affect the layman of earlier times, with his more individualistic religious orientation, to the same extent. The worship of the

Christian communion touches us first and foremost in the church of our own confession; can we rediscover it in the worship of other confessions? Why can we not take part in the communion of our Orthodox brothers, and why can many Anglicans not take part in the Lord's Supper as celebrated by the Lutheran Churches, even when all baptised Christians coming with a sincere faith in our Lord are invited to do so? These questions, which acquired a very practical importance in Boll amid the intensive emphasis on worship shared by all, and became of more and more importance the more the general desire for co-operation among lay groups approached fulfilment, bring us to the very heart of the ecumenical movement. It should be stressed in this connection that laymen are enabled to a quite new degree by such experiences to take their part in bearing the distress of the Church's lack of unity, and to do their share, on the basis of that unity given in Christ, towards putting an end to that distress. The layman's place in ecumenical affairs is not only where "life and work" or missionary witness are concerned, but where it is sought to give adequate expression to the life of the Church of Christ in the "faith and order" of the churches.

Bible Study

If the services were the scaffolding within which the whole conference was constructed, the Bible study is comparable to a great girder holding the structure together. Every morning more than an hour and a half was devoted to work on the Bible, and many members have declared that this was for them the most valuable element in the whole meeting. It was observed right at the start that a fresh confrontation with the message of the Bible from the beginning was the basis of most of the modern lay movements in Europe. In this connection the leader of Study Group II, Prof. Carl Schweitzer, in his verbal introduction to the group's report, stated that "the lay movement will be a Bible movement or it will not exist at all."

Mlle de Diétrich gave an introduction in plenary session to the subject "The Church in the Acts of the Apostles," members having been sent a preparatory paper on the theme before the conference. Members subsequently met on five further mornings in twelve groups of about twenty people each, to work over one particular aspect of the main theme starting from a given text. These aspects were:

- I. The Missionary Vocation of the Church (Acts 1, viii).
- II. The Message of the Church (Acts 2, xxxvi-xxxix).
- III. The Church, a Community (Acts 2, xlii-xlvi).
- IV. The Church Confesses its Faith in Word and Deed (Acts 4, xiii-xxx).
- V. The Necessity for the Church to Open its Doors (Acts 10, xxxiv-xlviii).

Related texts were furnished for preparation. In addition, the texts were explored by means of special questions with which each member was provided. Mlle de Diétrich and the leaders of the Bible groups met every day to prepare the next day's work and report their own groups' findings. On the last day but one Mlle de Diétrich once more gave a summary in plenary session, the text of which is reproduced further on in this bulletin.

Lectures and Evening Meetings

What Does Man Live By?

The chairman of the conference, Prof. Hendrik *Kraemer*, Director of the Ecumenical Institute, opened the proceedings with a lecture on the general theme of the meeting, "Towards a Rediscovery of Man." It was not, he said, a theme of particular originality, but it was one of particular relevance for the times we lived in. Man himself was at stake in the great social, political and ideological dispositions of the day, which amounted to a life-and-death struggle. It was the aim of this conference to realise with fresh energy that the Christian Church, if it could only properly understand its own nature and live and think by faith, was the defender of man. The living members of the Church, set by God in the order of this world, were representatives of a new dimension and reality of life, having its origins in the working of Divine salvation in Christ.

Linked with this was a talk by Prof. *Ellul*, of France, on "Man in a Rationalised Mass Society." In contrast to earlier times, he said, technics had today become total in scope. Man was the object treated by technics, though not in all cases, unsatisfactorily. But man did, for his technical success, have to reckon with the loss of his awareness of his own personality, and the loss of his freedom. From the human point of view, therefore, there was no effective remedy where there was not that other dimension, the dimension of grace. After his lecture Professor Ellul was asked no less than fifty questions on the subject. In answering he made clear again that he conceived of technics not as an evil in itself but as of a creation of the human mind which might serve for good or for ill. Technics were one of those "powers" of the world which had been vanquished by Christ. The speaker therefore disclaimed any sort of Gandhian revolt against power technics, and reaffirmed their limited legitimacy. Bishop *Lilje* went into the question "What is Man?" Because it was always man who concerned himself with science, anthropology was today known and recognised as being at the back of every science. Man's declaration of independence, as begun by the eighteenth century and completed by the nineteenth, had had as its ineluctable result the complete enslavement of man. For only in the sight of God could man be recognised for what he was—man subject to God, man called by Christ, man integrated into the Christian communion. That was the new dimension indicated by Prof. Ellul in his conclusion. In a further, objective exploration of the subject, the Orthodox thinker M. Paul *Evdokimov*, of Paris, spoke on the nature of community. In face of the natural grouping based on common origin, and the historical grouping based on a common end, and in face of the collectivity with its dissolution of the personal element, we had, he said, the community of the Church oriented upon personality. The local congregation was by its nature a para-parochial community, constantly striving beyond its own boundaries, and surrounded by a number of separate communities through which it underwent decentralisation and formed links with the world. For the point was that man should be redeemed along with his environment, and not wrenched out of it as pure soul. The Church existed not for itself and its members, but for Christ, and thereby for the redemption of the world.

What Does Man Live For?

If the first lectures concerned themselves essentially with the existence of man, the ones that followed were devoted to man's actions. They were in direct relation to certain themes explored by the study groups, and hence were not, like the others, dealt with by special discussion groups.

M. Pierre *Lebailly*, a French industrialist and head of the Associations Professionnelles Protestantes, spoke from mature personal experience on "Man's Responsibility in the Social and Occupational Realms." Responsibility could only be properly shouldered where there was knowledge, authority and freedom. Both our authority and our freedom depended on our faith. There were no universal solutions: everything depended on spiritual maturity and the profundity of men's faith. Dr. Gustav *Heinemann*, of Germany, dealt with "Man's Responsibility in the Political Realm." Taking as his starting-point the constantly-increasing tendency to avoid responsibility in and regarding politics, he set forth the basic principles of Christian responsibility, and on this foundation strongly emphasised that it was in this very situation of today, so apparently desperate politically, that Christians must force themselves not to shy away from responsibility in political affairs. Dr. *Renkewitz*, of the Moravian Brethren, in a short evening talk gave an account of the way in which the activities of the two Blumhardts, father and son, pastors in Boll, had been steeped in the realisation of social and political responsibility proceeding from the very centre of the Christian faith.

Man—Christian Man—Lay Christian Man

Miss Mollie *Batten*, of Great Britain, concluded the series of morning lectures with a summary report on "The Laity as the Spearhead of the Church," in which she said that laymen were the "point" of the Church to man, and at the same time the "point" of the Church in defence of man. Earlier on in the conference, Dr. *Visser 't Hooft* had spoken on "The Role of the Laymen in the World Council of Churches." The ecumenical movement, he emphasised, counted among its most important pioneers, friends and workers a large number of laymen: on the other hand, the members of the World Council were churches. These twin elements of origin stood to one another in a healthy tension. In the present situation, the laity were of special importance, because in them the problem of the Church amid the secularised world came to a head. At the same time, there were signs here and there that the Church was coming to be the shelter and shield of man—the simple "layman" as such—as he now was, homeless and underprivileged in the specialisation of modern society. Linking up with these observations, and with the study work done during the conference, the *Secretary* for Laymen's Work spoke at the end of the conference on "The Present State and Future Tasks of Lay Work." He declared that the aim of lay work was the missionary church—extending the sense of Christian community both in depth and in breadth. The elements by which lay work fulfilled itself were the deepening of spiritual awareness, the provision of theological preparation, the effort after responsible thought, and an action appropriate to the circumstances. Co-operation among the various groups and movements must not be awaited from above, and it could not come from outside. It must grow up out of the nature of the movements themselves, working out as they did well beyond their statutory limitations, in view of the tasks which faced them one and all in the world of

today. That these tasks were indeed world-wide was demonstrated in an address one evening by Prof. *Kraemer*, who was just back from a tour of India, Pakistan and Indonesia. In his "Glimpses of the Church's Situation in Different Parts of the World," he described the churches in many areas of Eastern Asia as being in the new position of having to live and bear witness to Christ among their own people as independent and responsible minority groups. The call to the lay apostolate was plain for all to hear in South-East Asia, and was in many respects a call to ourselves at the same time. Dr. Eberhard *Müller's* report on the Evangelical Academies made stereoscopically clear how this call had been heard in Germany and what needed to be done to prevent the conscience thus awakened from lapsing once more into coma. Dr. *von Thadden*, who had just arrived from Berlin, gave a gripping account of that prodigious event, the Berlin Kirchentag.

Study Groups

In the full programme of the Conference, which appeared in November 1950, the subjects of the nine study-groups were announced as follows :

- I. The place of the layman in the worship of the Church and the question of reforming the form of service.
- II. Questions raised for the layman by the study of the Bible : difficulties and demands.
- III. New ways of evangelism.
- IV. In search of an understanding of the Christian layman's vocation in the world.
- V. Do we need "Encyclicals" on social questions ?
- VI. Opportunities and limits of co-operation between Christians and non-Christians for political and social work.
- VII. Moral conflicts of the Christian in a secular occupation.
- VIII. Relationships between men and women in professional and public life.
- IX. The special responsibility of Christians in the present situation in Europe.

The persons invited were asked to promise in advance to co-operate in one of these nine groups, and to prepare themselves as much as possible beforehand in their work with the circle to which they belonged. For each of the nine subjects an introduction was sent on the present stage of the problem, together with a number of questions.

After the participants in Bad Boll had got to know each other in free discussion-groups, they were divided during the second half of the conference into study-groups which discussed the questions involved under the guidance of a small group of responsible persons and worked out a report. The reports of the nine groups were presented on the last two days of the conference and introduced by one of the group leaders. The Conference in most cases approved the reports after only a short discussion.

In our opinion the study-groups were the problematic part of the conference. They were intended to provide a meeting-place where the best experiences of lay work in Europe might be compared and plans for future co-operation mapped

out, based on a realistic view of what was required. This purpose was not achieved, and one wonders why. The reason is probably that in spite of everything the preparations were not started early enough, and were not always definite enough. Again, the preparatory material had not been adequately studied; hardly any comments were made on the documents which had been sent out beforehand. But the greatest difficulty was due to the make-up of the Conference. It included the group of laymen who had considerable experience of lay work in their own countries and were therefore familiar with the questions from that angle. Then there were people who had never attended a conference of this kind before, and who realised for the first time the difficulty and the significance of the problems involved. And lastly there were the theologians, to whom the theological treatment of the questions was nothing fresh, but who did not always fully understand the problems experienced by the laymen. This difficulty was inherent in the make-up of the conference, as originally planned. For none of these three types could be dispensed with, and the representatives of each type did get into close touch with the others, to their mutual enrichment. But, as far as the work of the conference was concerned, did they really work together? Very few of the participants were equal to the demands of ecumenical co-operation. Not only were there language difficulties: the participants' knowledge of each others' background was inadequate and impeded clear and successful co-operation. So with a few exceptions, the Conference did not achieve any results beyond what was already common knowledge to the experts in the various fields, and by necessity it was on a far lower level than the work achieved by the most advanced groups during the last few years in their own countries.

On the other hand it was encouraging to see with what enthusiasm and readiness the participants threw themselves into the work of the study-groups. We must not forget the debt of gratitude that we owe to those who prepared the Reports, nor the significance of the fact that what they say in their Reports can be endorsed by so many Christians from such entirely different backgrounds. In the Christian Church the common experience of the whole Church is ultimately more important than the pioneer achievement of the individual thinkers—however indispensable his achievement may be. By this we do not mean that the participants at the Bad Boll Conference may be regarded as representative of the churches as they actually exist today. We have every cause for thankfulness, if the opinions stated in the Reports of the study-groups at the European Laymen's Conference are generally shared by our churches.

The Christian Community and the Christian Associations affiliated to it

The Reports of study-groups I to IV are briefly discussed under the above heading (see the text of the Reports in question). These four study-groups were led by Jean Bosc (France), Carl Schweitzer (Germany), Madeleine Barot (France) and Jan Rupp (Holland) respectively.

The para-parochial community, of which M. Evdokimov had spoken, is the common centre upon which the efforts described in the four Reports are focused. The mutual experience, everywhere the same, may be described as follows: a Christian association that is not in relation with a Community hangs in the air. A Community which does not form affiliated associations is standing still.

Group I emphasised that the religious service, usually the Sunday service, is the centre of the life of the Christian Community gathered around Word and Sacrament. This service is taken by the person specially responsible for it, *i.e.*

usually by the pastor. Indeed "there is a permanent gap between the clergy and the churchgoers, and a further one between the churchgoers and those on the fringe or right outside. It was evident to us that laymen could play a very important part as connecting-links in this situation." The laymen should cooperate with the pastor in preparing his sermon, and the pastor should incorporate in his sermon the difficulties and problems experienced by his lay co-operators, and the insights which they have thereby gained.

Both pastor and laity must realise that worship is an act by the whole community, and must constantly bear in mind the particular central "community" aspect of Holy Communion. From this centre the sense of community spreads gradually outwards. The fellowship of the Christian community, if it is genuine, cannot suddenly cease when the members leave the church building; it must permeate the whole of their everyday life. But in addition to this a living congregation will form special groups, through which it will build bridges to the people on the fringe of the church, and outside it. Group I recommends special meetings for those who still feel strange in the main church service. The form taken by these meetings should be adapted entirely to their particular milieu and purpose. The arrangements should be in the hands of laymen who are already in close touch with the persons attending through their ordinary occupations or through leisure interests. The Report of Group IV adds that special services of this kind should be held to meet the needs of special occupational groups within the Church. Occasionally the main Sunday service could be focused upon the concerns of one special occupational group, as the Harvest Festival (for instance) is specially connected with the farmers.

Group II confirms that the basis of all lay work in the Church, *i.e.* the universal priesthood, stands or falls with the problem of a true understanding of the Bible. In addition to the main service and the general Bible study led by the pastor, in every living parish Bible-groups should be formed, taking the form of working parties. The parish will not thereby dissolve. Quite the contrary: "the true parish should be built up in the first place out of such groups, as its living cells." The disagreement with Group I was only apparent, Group I regarding the Sunday service as the centre of the Church's life. But the main concern of both groups was the same—the Church as a whole, whose life is manifested in its parts. The pastor, as the representative of the Community as a whole, will be the man who is spiritually responsible for these Bible groups, but they should be run entirely by laymen. Ideally each group should be drawn from all walks of life. But in practice the studies will have to be adapted to the different milieux, and a distinction must be drawn between Bible groups for beginners and those for advanced students. "The theologian should help the layman towards acquiring the necessary technical knowledge for a real understanding of the Bible. But the living truth, which takes hold of him directly and completely, must be found out of the Bible by each layman for himself."

On this point also a discussion between Groups I and II would have been valuable, but there was no time for one. For Group I emphasised the central significance of the church-community, not only in space but also in time. And Group VI insisted—though in a slightly different connection—that Protestants should be enabled to draw on the common fund of all Christian experience more than they usually do. So we do not approach the Bible as separate individuals. We are obliged to read it always together "with our fathers and brothers" (Karl Barth), although the Word of God is always addressed to each of us direct.

Group III takes up the subject of the Community and the associations or fellowships from the point of view of Evangelism. Europe has become a mission field. It is no longer adequate to carry on evangelism in the sense of recalling "the lost sheep" (Evdokimov) to the Church. Those who wish to witness to Jesus Christ today must go out on a human basis to meet their fellow-men who know nothing of Christ and who reject the Church as a petty-bourgeois organisation. If a group consisting of at least two church-members feel responsible in this way for the fellow-men who come their way, then that is Evangelism. Evangelism is not there the prerogative of the "gifted Evangelist"; it is carried on by the Christian community, which goes out to evangelise, represented by a certain group. Through Evangelism, a fresh fellowship is created. This new fellowship may either become gradually assimilated into an already existing community, or form a separate community. This brief summary brings out the problem sharply, but it is not developed in the Report of *Group III* as one would wish.

Furthermore, the Report points out that the confessional question is a serious obstacle to evangelism, at any rate in a country in which several or many denominations or churches exist side by side. In fact *Group III* was the only one which drew attention to a situation which is important for the subject of Community and Association, and which presents difficulties. The ecumenical question of the relation of the *one* Church of Jesus Christ to the separated communities which today call themselves churches or denominations is not unrelated to the relationship between Community and Association with which we are concerned here, although they are two different questions which should not be confused.

Henri de Tienda (France) gave an instructive example of modern evangelism. He showed one of the usual secular films and then described his own method of evangelism through films.

Divine service, the Bible and Evangelism are elements and functions which are rooted in the nature of the Christian community. The forms of Community and Association thereby necessitated can still easily be seen spreading out from a common centre. But what about the church member's occupation, his work outside the Church in the framework of human society? Is it also part of the nature of the Church that its members are usually working in the world, like other people, and exercising a function in society determined by the economic system? A laymen's study-group could not be expected, in five or six sessions, to find a valid answer to this truly disturbing question, which crops up in all the theological discussions today in quite a new way, cutting right across the confessions, and which we are still trying to answer.

The Report of *Group IV* includes the following sentence, as a critical norm for the workaday world: "Every occupation carries within it a vocation." *Group IV* is of the opinion that the "occupations," especially manual occupations, should be such as to allow room for this potential vocation within them. But the Report adds: "No occupation (*i.e.* not even an occupation which is a vocation?) is without sin." This raised a number of questions which really could not be dealt with in such a brief Report. But the Report draws attention to an important point—that there is a relationship between the Church and the occupations of its members. Their work is part of the concern of the Church.

The Church must help its members in their occupational difficulties and temptations, and must try to understand them. That is an enormous task in the specialised world of today. But perhaps it is the task of the Christian Church precisely to be man's refuge, so that the inhumanity of mere specialisation is brought back

into the sphere of human understanding and true communication. And here the association assumes its rights, side by side with the community. As is already happening in certain cases, more and more vocational groups should be formed, in which church members who share the same occupation can help each other, and in which they also feel special responsibility for their colleagues who are outside the Church. These occupational groups can be adapted to the mode of life of the particular occupation, so that even people who are sceptical about the Church can feel quite at home.

Finally, all four Reports point out that things must not be allowed to take their own course. The laity and the pastors must be equipped to face the tasks which await them in this connection. Theologians *must* become more closely acquainted with the industrial, social and cultural life, which is the environment of the laity. The laity should be initiated into the meaning of the divine service, a true understanding of the Bible and methods of group Bible study; they should also be trained and equipped to see their occupation in the light of the Gospel, and to become leaders of occupational groups. In many places a promising beginning has been made with conferences, courses and institutes. Still more will have to be done, and it must be done in a more organised and systematic way. This also means that it is absolutely essential to coordinate the planning within each Church, within each country, within Europe and within the W.C.C.

The Church and its Members in relation to social and political life

The Reports of study-groups V to VIII are briefly discussed under this heading. The texts are available in the original and in translation (see list of documents). The groups were led by Adrianus van Biemen (Holland), John W. Lawrence (Great Britain), Michael Foster (Great Britain), Reimer Mager (Germany). The relation between these reports and the lectures of M. Lebailly and Dr Heinemann has already been mentioned.

The common convictions shared by the four groups can be seen in the following factor. For the Christian faith the Church is not merely part of the general life of human society. The Church faces social and political life as something different. It can therefore never simply identify itself with any political party or social group, nor take part in the life of the world in the form of a political party or an organisation for social work; if it does so, the Church will perish. But it has to exercise the office of watchman with regard to the State and the whole sphere of social action. The Church must not retire from the world: it must "attack the world with love," as expressed in the Report of Group VI. But in addition to this open relationship between the Church and society there also exists a much more intimate link—the church members who are active in secular social and political life in one form or another, or who depend upon them for their means of livelihood. This gives rise to two questions. Firstly, what has the Church to say to the State and to the other organs of political and social life? Secondly, what should be the attitude of Christians as church members to the questions of political and social life? The two questions may be kept separate. This was not expressed with sufficient clarity in the Reports. But then these two questions are certainly closely connected in the practical sphere. A further practical question that arises is, what is the significance, for the life of the Church, of the fact that its members are involved in political and social life and that their lives are largely

determined by political and social factors ? This question forms a bridge between the problem of Community and Association on the one hand, and the questions mentioned here on the other. Although it was not expressly one of the subjects under enquiry, it cropped up in every one of the study-groups.

The Report of *Group V* expresses the unqualified conviction that the Word of God contains indications for the relations of the individual to society. From this the Report deduces that it is the duty of the Churches "to provide the individual Christian or non-Christian, the church at local level, and the social, economic and political structures, large and small, with clear guidance regarding their social responsibility."

"In accordance with the spirit and tradition of the churches belonging to the Council," it is not possible for these churches to issue "encyclicals." But the churches can and should "issue indications or directives summoning individuals, parishes, associations and nations to responsibility, and helping them so that they may be in a position to take proper decisions in their own field." The exact meaning of "encyclical" (as understood in the Roman Catholic Church) is not explained. Nor is the question raised as to what sort of "spirit and tradition" determines the actions of the other churches in this field. Lastly, the distinction between the recommended "indications and directives" and the Papal Encyclicals (if rightly understood) is not clear.

The Report contains some excellent suggestions, though rather too many of them, as to which social and political questions need to have light thrown on them by the Church, and how such light may be achieved in practice by creating study committees, making full use of the already existing working groups. We shall revert to one aspect of this matter again later on. A criticism of the Amsterdam Assembly's Report on "The Responsible Society" insists that "the indications be formulated in such a way that they address themselves to the conscience of Christians, who then realise the necessity of deciding on a definite solution (in the social problem)." This again gives rise to certain questions. But the idea of creating "a clear, general Christian social ethic" and a corresponding "social catechism for use in the instruction of candidates for Confirmation and for Christian training of all kinds" is worthy of further consideration.

Group VI supplemented the considerations of *Group V* by a series of very apt formulations on the same theme. It is not sufficient for the Church to declare, that the practical decisions in politics and social life are a matter for the individual. "The ultimate responsibility in such decisions rests upon the individual. But the churches must help the individual Christian, so that he can draw on the common fund of all Christian experience. The Christian has a right to receive guidance from the Church on basic questions." There will still be plenty of situations in which the individual must venture to take a decision without being backed by adequate common knowledge. That is why different Christians often arrive at different solutions. But it is important that Christian fellowship should nevertheless remain unbroken. On this point a discussion with *Group V* would be particularly appropriate.

The Report then turns to what Christians can do in the political and social arena, and here it encounters a disagreement in the group between those who want to have special Christian or Protestant political parties, trade unions and so on, and the majority who think this would involve more dangers than advantages and will agree to such a desire only in case of absolute necessity. Study-

group IX was of the same opinion as the majority here. Lastly, the Report recommends the churches to make their influence more strongly felt in the great questions of national and international politics. The problems involved are not mentioned. The exaggerated wording of the Report at this point seem to be partly due to an over-estimation of the spiritual influence of the churches upon the nations.

In *Group VII* the French spirit was in conflict with the English one. For the French, the subject was falsely stated, because for the Christian there is really no question of morality, but only questions of faith. For the English, with their secure tradition of a relatively high general moral standard, a question already arises which may be a serious weight upon a Christian's conscience: should Christians disregard formal, half-forgotten state regulations, to which no-one pays any more attention? A challenge to disobey such regulations—possibly for humanitarian reasons—then means a moral conflict for the Christian. The struggle is expressed in a very precise Report, which tries to bridge the conflict of opinion on a higher level. The Report lists a number of "attitudes to be rejected" including "the belief that rules can be formulated which would enable the Christian to live without sin." The phrase "the end justifies the means" is also rejected—though without any distinctions being drawn.

On the other hand "the Christian's task is to be regarded as the incarnation of his faith in his life, his life not only in the Church but in the world." "The Christian solution lies not in obeying rules but in obeying God's will as revealed in Christ." "Every moral conflict is a sign of sin"; the conflict is due to my disobedience to God at some earlier time in my life. "The Christian is bound to obey the State, as other men are... but he is bound to disobey the law of the State when his obedience to God demands it. Such cases would be when the whole purpose of society, or the proclamation of the Gospel, or human life and personality are threatened (by the State)." In all our actions in this sphere we must rely on forgiveness. "It is a moralistic temptation to search for such a solution as would free the Christian from his perpetual need of forgiveness."

Group VIII studied "The Relationships between Men and Women in Professional and Public Life." Clearer ideas on this question are just as much the concern of the Church as marriage and family life. In face of the injustices which still persist, and especially of the resentment still met with (even in Christian circles), the Report stresses the fundamental principle of equal rights for men and women. The increasing participation of women in professional and public life is an essential feature of the development of modern society and should be welcomed by Christians more warmly than it usually is. "It cannot but be observed that work in co-operation (between men and women) is fruitful and therefore essential. It may be said that the absence of women in many fields has been and is the cause of general impoverishment. Co-operation creates a richer and more human atmosphere." It certainly involves difficulties, and dangers, which are mentioned in detail. It is a good sign that the Commission (which was composed of men and women) did not claim to have an answer to all the questions which arose. We do not know how to meet many of the difficulties arising from the latest trends in modern society; at best we are merely groping for solutions, and it is better to leave these questions open than to cloak them in obsolete solutions, which are not valid in the present situation. The extremely cautious phrasing of the Report is also due to the fact that the majority of churchgoers are not really equipped to face these new trends in society.

The Churches, Christians and Europe

Group IX, led by Heinz Kloppenburg, drew up a Report on the subject, "Toward a United Europe," which will be discussed in connection with the related sections of the Report of Group VI and with the paper by *Albert Finet*. Group IX examined the reports of the Ecumenical Commission on European Co-operation of February and July 1951. Its Report evoked prolonged discussion in the plenary meeting, and was approved by an overwhelming majority, though not unanimously. All the documents mentioned here (see list of documents) are available, and they must be studied in order to have a grasp of the subject.

In a lecture delivered with inimitable charm, M. Finet asserted that various endeavours to achieve European unity all "have their origin in the fear of Communism." The Report of Group IX does not question this fact, but it maintains that "the unity of Europe cannot be fashioned out of fear nor by pressure from outside." The Report insists that Europe must be conceived of "as an entity, which cannot be destroyed by zonal boundaries or artificial divisions." M. Finet had not given any evaluation of the different efforts for European unity from the Christian point of view; he had only urged Christians to make their own special contribution to the unity of Europe in whatever situation they were placed. But Group IX, going straight to the heart of the matter, asked: "What is this Christian contribution?" As a result of its view of the European problem, based not on *Realpolitik* but on deep considerations, the group answered consistently that it was the task of the Churches, and of their members, to support the right basis for European unity. This task is all the more urgent if M. Finet's assertion is true, that the existing efforts towards unity are really based on fear.

According to the Report of Group IX, the real basis consists in recognising that the nations of Europe are responsible for safeguarding their common heritage. This obligation consists in "a readiness to make joint sacrifices for the effective safeguarding of the inalienable rights of man and the seeking of peace in justice and freedom." It is the special responsibility of Christians to insist "that Europe should be concerned to order matters so that its various peoples may live side by side in brotherly co-operation and consideration, and thereby to enable them to put their endowments to good service on behalf of one another and of the other nations in the world."

The churches must also clean up their own house. They cannot really advocate the union of Europe unless they are prepared to work for the unity of the churches. "The establishment of a European Council of Churches" is therefore proposed. For this, three conditions are necessary:

- (a) "this intra-European work should be carried out subject to the views of those in all parts of the world in solidarity with the ecumenical cause";
- (b) "the work already being done within the European movements should not be set aside, but supported and coordinated";
- (c) the European work in the churches "should be done in close co-operation between the laymen concerned and the leaders of the churches."

Further, the Report contains a number of well-considered suggestions as to which problems call for solution in the field of church co-operation in Europe. The Report does not forget to point out that most of these questions are already being dealt with by intra-European groups, and that if they were dealt with by the churches this would merely involve coordination and organisation and possibly official church rectification.

The interesting thing about the Report of Group V in this connection is the fact that Group V also urges the creation of a European Council of Churches. This request was not based (like that of Group IX) on a consideration of the state of Europe, but arose out of the question how the Church could give guidance to its members on social and political questions. In the opinion of Group V, this guidance should go further than laying down general principles, and should be as practical as possible. The group rightly saw that in present circumstances we cannot speak realistically and practically about social and political questions unless we see them in their European setting. A church which does not look beyond the frontiers of its own country has too limited a horizon to perceive the real situation. This point of view should play an important part in the contacts between the churches. It might do much to clear away the provincial atmosphere in many of our churches. As has rightly been said, and as will be proved during the course of later developments, this is an outstanding task for the laity, not only to work for European co-operation, but also to see that their churches are spiritually ready, and really equipped, for such European cooperation.

AND NOW WHAT?

A conference such as this, however satisfactory, is not an end in itself. It acquires its significance from the fact of its being the summing-up of years of effort and the encouraging starting-point for further developments. If it can be said that the lay movements, groups and institutes in Europe have been maintaining contact and seeking co-operation, within the World Council of Churches, since 1947, then the primary purpose is to a large extent achieved. The Bad Boll conference confirmed, and eventually contributed to, the fact that the spiritual, intellectual and organisational contacts are already there, and that only at certain points do they require to be extended. On the spiritual and intellectual level there is the realisation of belonging together, which entails everywhere the desire, not to forget the variations in particular national, social, cultural and, especially, ecclesiastical character, but to bring them along too.

But it is in this very circumstance that we have the task for the future. For the second aim, that of effective and systematic co-operation, has, while it has been tackled here and there, not been achieved as a whole. Now, it should be made perfectly clear to all concerned that this aim's significance is not inherent in it. World co-operation or European co-operation for co-operation's sake may come about in process of time, but it is not a true motive for the proceedings entered into by the lay movements. Co-operation can be proclaimed as their purpose only when it is an indispensable means for the fulfilment of their task. It is difficult to give the substance of this task in a few words, especially as it requires to be constantly re-examined. I have occasionally shown that I personally am inclined to see it as a dual entity, the renewal of the Christian community and the confrontation, and where possible interpenetration, of family, professional, social, political and cultural life with the forces of the Christian faith. The two aspects are very intimately linked, and neither can be tackled in isolation without leading very quickly in the wrong direction.

It may seem as if the renewal of Christian communities spiritually, evangelistically and sociologically were something which could only be forthcoming from the inner being of the individual community itself, and to which, therefore,

large-scale co-operation might possibly offer helpful suggestions but could not contribute anything of very great value. But in this case appearances are deceptive. For the community is renewed not by its own inner forces but by the force from its centre, which is beyond it—that is, by Jesus Christ. And, as cannot now be doubted by anyone, the lay movements, groups and institutes too are linked with that centre. For that reason, forces of a nature to renew the Christian community are latent within them, whatever their particular attitude, of loyalty or of criticism, to existing congregations. It is, on the other hand, true that these forces have for the most part not yet been reduced to a form in which they can be of value to the communities concerned, whether that is due more to hostility born of self-satisfaction on the part of the local churches or to the sometimes rather haughty impatience of particular lay groups. In any case, it seems to me very definitely to be one of the aims for the next phase of development, that the pioneer work done in recent years in the lay movements should be rendered productive for the lives of our communities themselves. Thus congregations and lay movements both are confronted with the task of putting into practice, by mutual give and take, the proper relation between “the Christian Community and the Christian Associations” (see above). This seems to me, however, to be a task which cannot be performed by the individual parish alone in connection with an active local lay or evangelism group: it is of its very essence ecumenical. For the correct relating of community to association can only be achieved by rethinking the relation of the total entity of the congregation as the Body of Christ and as a confessional community, of evangelism and adoration, of the Kingdom of God and the Church. But this is touching upon the essential ecumenical theme, which it is impossible to keep off for anyone earnestly seeking to make what has been launched upon in the lay movements a matter of living concern to Christian congregations also.

Equally concrete is the second task facing us, that of a confrontation between the Christian faith with its ethos and the trends of the modern world in social, political and cultural life. It is perhaps not an exaggeration to say that there has been more pondering of this, based on a Christianity deliberately taking the Bible for its guide, in Europe in the last twenty years than in the previous two hundred. The strivings of the lay movements and institutes at this point discharge themselves into the great current which is fed by the experiences of the churches threatened through the rise of the total State, by the work of modern theology, and by the rethinking process entered upon by an imposing number of leading minds in the sciences and the arts. All this rather overwhelms our lay movements. Where the slogan used to be “expand into the parishes” here it has to be “concentrate on what can in fact be achieved.” Otherwise we run that very serious risk of dilettantism which Prof. Ellul so rightly pointed out in an account of the Bad Boll conference.

It is too soon to seek to list the fields which will lie at the centre of this concentration movement. What is certain is that the movement can only be made together, on the basis of large-scale co-operation, provided it does not strike out at random and lead to intellectual and spiritual impoverishment. The World Council Central Committee this summer in Rolle adopted the theme “The Christian in his Vocation” as one of the six study subjects for the next World Assembly, and appointed the Director of the Ecumenical Institute to be chairman of the ecumenical commission dealing with the question, with the Secretary for Laymen’s Work as secretary. The Central Committee in so doing expressed

the hope that the lay movements, groups and institutes would be in a position to make a real contribution to the thought and action of the Churches from the ecumenical point of view. In addition, the conference in Bad Boll noted that anyone on the Continent desiring to say something of sound value concerning political, social or cultural problems needs to examine those problems in an overall European perspective, and thence to extend the lines of that perspective out into the world as a whole. Any attempt to renounce large-scale co-operation would be turning our backs on reality.

And so the lay movements *are* going to work together. Whether they can do so well and valuably remains to be seen. A conference of leading workers in these groups and institutes to be held in the New Year of 1952 will have an important contribution to make to the new conception of practical co-operation. The unexpectedly numerous reports and comments which have appeared on the European Laymen's Conference in newspapers and periodicals are rather lacking in useful indications on this point, with certain important exceptions, some of which we reproduce below. It is striking to note how infrequent, even in the more detailed accounts, are any traces of an outlook reaching beyond the writer's own back door, let alone of any ecumenical perspective—an indication of the scope of the task facing us when we speak of co-operation. For it is certainly "green wood" that we are dealing with here : what shall be done in the dry ?

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Instead of a bibliography for a special subject which, we hope, will form part of each number of the Bulletin we insert here a list of documents from the *European Laymen's Conference*. These documents are available to anyone on payment of Sw. Fr. —.05 per page (or its equivalent in other currencies) to meet part of the cost of production. All documents may be reproduced provided the source is indicated and three copies are sent to the Secretary for Laymen's Work in the World Council of Churches, 17, route de Malagnou, Geneva.

I. General

Programme of the Conference	(in the three languages)	
Aim and Organisation of the European Laymen's Conference		d e f 7 p.
List of Participants	(in the three languages)	22 p.
List of Officers	(in the three languages)	6 p.
Bible Study Outline: Book of Acts		d e f 5 p.

II. Addresses and Speeches

M. BATTEN	Laity as the Spearhead of the Church. (Outline)	d e f 3 p.
S. DE DIÉTRICH	Introduction to the Bible Studies	d e f 5 p.
J. ELLUL	Man in a Rationalised Mass Society (Recorded Summary of Discussions and Outline)	d e f 4 p.
P. EVDOKIMOV	What is Community?	d e f 11 p.
A. FINET	Towards a United Europe (Outline)	d e f 5 p.
G. HEINEMANN	Man's Responsibility in the Political Realm	d e f 8 p.
H. KRAEMER	Towards a Rediscovery of Man. . . . (Outline)	d e f 2 p.
—	Glimpses of the Church's Situation in Different Parts of the World (Outline)	d e f 2 p.
P. LEBAILLY	Man's Responsibility in the Social and Occupational Realms	d e f 10 p.
H. LILJE	What is Man? (Recorded Summary)	d e f 3 p.
E. MÜLLER	The Evangelical Academies (Cache)	e 13 p.
H. RENKEWITZ	Bad Boll and the Blumhardts.	d e 4 p.
H. DE TIENDA	Specimen Talk from the System of Evangelism by Film (Outline)	d e f 4 p.
W. A. VISSER 'T HOOFT	The Rôle of the Laymen in the World Council of Churches (Recorded Summary)	d e f 3 p.
H. H. WALZ	Present State and Future Task of Laymen's Work	d e f 6 p.

III. Services

K. HARTENSTEIN	Sermon on the Text Acts 17, xxii	d e 3 p.
H. KLOPPENBURG	Opening Service with Sermon on Psalm 127 . . .	d f 2 p.
	Liturgy of Morning Prayers (in the three languages)	3 p.
	Liturgy of Closing Service (in the three languages)	11 p.

IV. Study groups

		<i>Preparatory Documents</i>	<i>Reports</i>
I	The place of the laymen in the worship of the Church. Is reform needed?	d e f 4 p.	d e f 4 p.
II	Questions raised for the layman by the study of the Bible: difficulties and demands	d e f 4 p.	d e f 5 p.
III	New forms of evangelism	d e f 5 p.	d e f 2 p.
IV	In search of an understanding of the Christian layman's vocation in the world	d e f 4 p.	d e f 3 p.
V	Do we need "Encyclicals" on social questions?	d e f 4 p.	d e f 4 p.
VI	Opportunities and limits of cooperation between Christians and non-Christians for political and social work	d e f 7 p.	d e f 3 p.
VII	Moral dilemmas of the Christian in a secular occupation.	d e f 4 p.	d e f 2 p.
VIII	Relationships between men and women in professional and public life	d e f 5 p.	d e f 4 p.
IX	Our specific responsibility as Christians in the present European situation	d e f 15 p.	d e f 2 p.

Letters indicate the languages in which the document concerned is available:
d = German, e = English, f = French.

The letter in *italics* indicates the language of the original.

PRESS REPORTS ON THE EUROPEAN LAYMEN'S CONFERENCE

Below we give extracts of comments from newspapers and periodicals which have come to our notice. Space forbids the complete reproduction of each text ; and what are given here are extracts from longer articles. Where the original is not in English, free unofficial translations have been made.

"I have talked with a student from Korea, a professor of engineering from Canada, a professor of theology from Spain, a journalist from Finland, a high civil servant from Switzerland, social welfare workers from the United States and Scandinavia. There are delegations also from France, Holland, Germany, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Austria and Greece.

And surely, among them are as tough a group of men as ever met together under Christian auspices. Several bear in mind and body the marks of totalitarian régimes. These men have experienced the new persecution at its bitter worst. When they speak of the Christian conflict with modern paganism they speak with first-hand knowledge."

"... Here was no artificial piety, none of that backslapping fellowship which some people seem to regard as an essential sign of grace in any Christian gathering, but a high seriousness and a clear determination which were enlivened and made bearable by a good humour and a vitality which seemed inexhaustible.

True enough, some delegates were beginning to feel the worse for wear by the end of the time ; but that should not be cause for surprise. They worked like Blacks. They were hard at it from breakfast time in the morning until the early hours of the next morning in plenary sessions, Bible study groups, committees, discussions and the rest. Even when the programme allowed opportunity for relaxation they were forming into twos and threes for further argument. The pace and the intensity were murderous. People felt that what they were doing was important. This was not just another bit of religious vapour but a time of decision. And the background, like a threat of universal destruction, was a consciousness of that oleaginous decadence I have tried to indicate.

It should be said, also, that the machinery of the conference worked admirably. This was not one of those conferences with shoddy organisation and an agenda flung together in five minutes. It was the result of hard preparation. If this is typical of the quality of work done at Geneva, our subscriptions to the World Council of Churches could hardly be better placed.

... The Conference receives its significance from the fact that it symbolises what can be described as no less than a Risorgimento of Europe's Christian laity. In a new kind of concert with the clergy these are now recognising their responsibility for answering the problems of their nations and out of this recognition is arising a strong and forceful policy, a policy, moreover, which is not constructed negatively as an answer to Communism but which is creative in its own right. It is an attack upon the secular world. In a continent where masses of people are sinking into spiritual decadence and where no beacon light shines to guide the pessimistic and depressed, this movement may, as movements with clear and decisive purpose often do, exert an influence far beyond what we can now foresee."

(London : *Church of England Newspaper*,
July 24th and August 3rd, 1951.)

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"It was certainly a success.

I gave you a glimpse of it in my last report ; today I am in a position to confirm this, despite the fact that certain contradictory features in the events, life and spirit of Bad Boll might lead one to doubt it.

If this meeting achieved what might have been expected of it, it is that it remained very firmly a *layman's* Conference ; the clergy present, who represented only one-sixth of the delegates, having played the game in all respects. They were so intent on not forcing issues—which they might well have done by bringing the stamp of their office to bear on Bible Study, group discussions and plenary sessions—that certain delegates were at times surprised to discover, during the course of the meetings, that so-and-so was an ecclesiastic, and not a layman along with all the others.

I have just said that certain dangers could have been avoided. I will mention only one—the most important. It appeared that the Conference had got to fulfil two conceptions which did not necessarily overlap : on the one hand there was the question of the *Discovery of Man* ; on the other the whole problem of coming forward to assure support to the European Movement, of which Strasbourg is the pivot, at the level of the Churches, and in particular by lay interpretation, but with hardly even a semi-official character.

Although the Conference achieved all that could be expected of it on the first point, on the second its conclusions were altogether different from what might have been expected. I can say that for me their evolution was one of the most striking factors in the Conference, for here we were confronted by all the problems of Europe as they appeared to us, with nothing but instability everywhere. As for our Swiss Churches, they too cannot escape from their responsibility in a world where every action has a spiritual significance, which after all is also their concern."

(Geneva : *La Vie Protestante*,
August 10th, 1951.)

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"At the European Laymen's Conference the mobilisation of the laymen became a reality. Here they took their own initiative and worked without asking for advice. They were independent and felt their own responsibility.

Their main problem was how to reach all those people working in offices and factories with whom priests and pastors do not get in contact. Here the layman has a great mission to fulfil, because being himself a clerk or a factory-worker he is really in contact with his fellow-workers, and he must feel it as his responsibility to make them familiar with the Christian faith and the Christian spirit.

The result of the Conference ? It is not easy to reply to this question, because these matters are of a kind that can be measured not in terms of results only in those of initiative and activity. In this respect, therefore, the European Laymen's Conference was of considerable importance."

(Stockholm : *Aftenposten*, September 8th, 1951.)

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"Bad Boll was not an event, but a beginning. There is a very great feeling of gratitude on the part of all those who took part in the Conference : any ecumenical gathering is always very rewarding in the opportunity it affords for contacts both spiritual, confessional, and international.

Jacques Ellul and several other Frenchmen have made a 'self'-criticism of Bad Boll. They note a tendency to grope around, to start each time at the beginning, at the spiritual bases for Christian social action, without ever getting any further. Here the French have taken the lead. This tendency is particularly noticeable to us, for we have tackled concrete questions and their solution for many years. It would seem that the World Council does not take any notice of the work and experience of '*Christianisme Social*.'

In short, is this not one of the inherent weaknesses of these European conferences, that they hesitate to take a firm stand in favour of the reforms of social and economic structures which are being imposed on the capitalist West? And could one get men who represent homogeneously enough all that is neither working-class nor artisan to agree on this point? It was often necessary for us to make an effort ourselves, writes F. Gay, not to view this gathering solely as a retreat for Christian intellectuals.

The problem of the training of laymen was raised. This was obviously a task beyond the powers of the parish. Group IV saw the need for Christian communities and movements such as ours, especially for dealing with the problems of professional people. To base an enquiry on these latter problems, which are real problems, but which are exceeded by, and arise from, questions of social structure, economical, political and spiritual problems, is a false line of departure. To isolate Christians in an organisation such as is proposed, to deal with the problems of their own professions, leads to a dangerous and conservative corporativism, because it is necessarily of short duration. This point of view is typical of a certain Anglo-Saxon Protestant point of view, and stems from an ignorance of social history. It is on the syndicalist-industrial, pacifist, etc., basis that our specialised work should be formed, thereby avoiding water-tight compartments. If you do not see this problem clearly, study the why and the wherefore of the professional syndicalism of Vichy, and you will better understand our caution.

The scanty conclusions of Bad Boll (Group VII) on 'Moral Dilemmas Facing Christians in Professional Life,' are a typical illustration of the danger which we have noted."

(Paris : *Christianisme Social*, Oct.-Nov. 1951.)

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"Far-reaching changes are taking place in the life and witness of the European churches. The Conference at Bad Boll, hardly even noticed by the German public, was an interesting expression of these striking changes. The important feature was not that two hundred delegates from fourteen countries held friendly discussions for ten days—though this is important enough in the present-day world—but that an intensification of church life is taking place, in conjunction with the layman's new awareness of his mission in the church and the world; this fact greatly impressed the delegates, and may have its repercussions in the churches represented there. Just as in Berlin, where the Kirchentag was in itself a witness, with all the ecclesiastical and political results of such a witness, so in Bad Boll the Conference represented the new relationship of Christians to each other and to the world, and thus a whole set of outmoded questions were disposed of, and a new constructive power set in motion. Hendrik Kraemer was surely right when he said, in his opening address, that it was exactly in the new conception of the calling and responsibility of laymen in the Church that ecumenism was revealed as an instrument of God in His plan for the redemption of the world. This was not a rising of laymen against theologians, it was rather evidence of their common striving towards the understanding of existing problems. It was hardly surprising then that confessional questions which are of such urgency to theologians hardly played any part at Bad Boll. Orthodox listened to Lutheran, and Reformed to Anglican. But it was also significant that the Anglicans held a Communion Service to which they invited members of other churches, and few will forget the great crowd of people of all denominations who, after the Orthodox service, received the sanctified bread from the Orthodox priest. Each delegate served as a member of his church, and it was thus a coming together as one, as our Lord promised to the members of His Church. And the most valuable contribution made on the subject of the Christian community came from an Orthodox delegate to the conference."

(Oldenburg : *Junge Kirche*, August 1951.)

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"Without doubt the high-light of this Conference was that in ten days the delegates achieved, confirmed, and demonstrated their unity: they became a community.

Those who came together at Bad Boll had, humanly speaking, plenty of reasons for disagreement. They came from very different countries. They belonged to different political creeds. They certainly belonged to very different economic systems. They represented divergent traditions. Think of the very considerable problems which might arise from the meeting of Communist and Conservative, an exponent of the planned social order and a representative of the *laissez-faire* system, of a Frenchman and a German, a West European and someone from behind the Iron Curtain. It would not take much to set them quarrelling. Even theologically speaking the meeting of Greek Orthodox and English Methodist might present certain difficulties.

But day by day it became apparent that such divergencies of opinion were being relegated to the background, that they had lost their sting, and were simply relative. This did not mean that the delegates became recluses, or that they minimised the daily problems of life, but merely that they met together each day to be confronted by the Bible, and to receive from it their daily bread, confessing together their Saviour Jesus Christ. And from this they discovered that the link which bound them was stronger than any force which might divide them—that this link was not of their own making, and that through it they came to understand each other.

Is this not an achievement, that those very things which daily divide our world did not divide them?

Here is another important aspect of those days—that these men, living in the world as it is today, should come together to find their unity in the Church, and that, having achieved this, it is to the Christian Church that they call to accomplish its mission in the world resolutely and faithfully. It surely is a most significant thing that laymen should call upon the Church to be truly the Church, and this cannot be too strongly emphasised."

(Paris: *Réforme*, August 4th, 1951.)

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Jacques Ellul writes an article entitled *Autocritique*, for he explains that he does not wish to appear patronising, and treat only the negative side of what really was a most enriching experience, and therefore he centres his criticism around himself. He wishes to be constructive, and he analyses certain factors in order that future mistakes may be avoided. He raises the question of preparation, and mentions the proportion of clergy who attended this essentially layman's conference.

"Without being pedantic, or denying the authority and value of the clergy, it might well be felt that it was a bit misleading to find that about twenty per cent of the participants in this conference of *laymen* were clergy, theological students, Church workers (which is practically the same thing) and members of the World Council staff.

This is a criticism not of people but of policy. A man who does not follow a profession which brings him daily into contact with the business world has a very different perspective. And the conference might have been quite different if no pastors had been there, albeit they did excellent work. The results would probably have been less good, but more realistic. Their presence may have caused the laity to retain some of their illusions and shun their true responsibilities.

This conference was certainly the first of its kind, but even so one might have assumed that certain well-known fundamental facts would be taken for granted, and used as a starting-point. For nearly twenty years I have heard these same old fundamental facts stated by the Church, and they are always the same. But no one ever goes any further than this—and yet it is time someone took the plunge in every direction in order that something may be achieved, both in action, in evangelism, in the building-up of the Church and the creation of some kind of ethics.

This raises a very real difficulty: I have heard these same facts stated at the Ecumenical Institute, and there too it seems impossible to reach out beyond them. Few people go to two Conferences on the same subject, and therefore the same thing is gone over again

with newcomers. I don't believe that the Church has the right to do this. At the present time it is far more important to go forward than to wait for the stragglers. In the body of the Church and in her corporate actions, these two things are not incompatible ; but in specialised organisations, such as this laymen's group represents, the most important thing is progress. Those who lag behind will learn too late what it means to walk in step.

... When one thinks of all the researches undertaken in recent years in psychology, psycho-sociology, psychometry, of the impressive results of scientific studies of man, and of all the efforts towards that synthesis of the human sciences which is one of the highest hopes of the learned, it is disappointing to have found no mention of all this in a conference for the 'Rediscovery of Man.' One is disappointed at the mediocrity of what Christians have to say. The Christian, it may be said, knows only Jesus Christ, and that is so, but he need not therefore ignore the labours of man, and he ought to avail himself of the means that the world has prepared for his use. The faith does not excuse us from being good workers. And in their own businesses Christians are as a rule good workers, but to the Church's business they bring an amateur mentality... This is one of the great lessons of this Conference, that our greatest enemy in the Church is amateurism. At this time when we are engaged in a bitter fight to the death with the powers of the world, we have no right to excuse our very mediocre efforts by thinking that God will be content with them, and will get us out of all our difficulties."

(Paris : *Réforme*, August 4th, 1951.)

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"Jacques Ellul, in *Réforme*, laments the rather mediocre level of learning and theology of the laymen who attended Bad Boll, and underlines the need for Bossey and the World Council to pay more attention to improving the technical and spiritual preparation of teams which are already a little more advanced in the basic facts of the Ecumenical movement. This is a task on the vertical rather than on the horizontal plane in the framework of ecumenical strategy, which must be accomplished in relation to the great spiritual demands which we are meeting. This criticism indeed seems at least in part to be justified, and worth noting, unless we fall into the opposite danger, which is even more serious—of having two types of laymen, one extremely competent, and the other relegated to the outer fringe of the Church.

The hypothesis of Ellul as set out above, and the efforts of Bossey to create more numerous cadres of Christians, conscious of their faith and vocation, must be not set against each other, but harmoniously integrated. The theme of the Conference 'Towards the Rediscovery of Man' might seem to be paradoxical, but this is not so, for it was just from this deep evaluation of man by himself, in his relationship with others, with his brothers, fellow-citizens, and fellow-countrymen, in his work, that different ideologies struggled with each other, and the Gospel was found to have much to say to man in this struggle."

(Torre Pelice : *La Luce*, August 24th, 1951.)

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"What Can Lay Conferences Do ?

To have experienced this is to realise the need for more of it, more ecumenical gatherings of all kinds. But we are only at the beginning, and may as yet be far from having found the best ways of developing such an interchange of life. Doubts were expressed, when conferences of 'the laity' were first mooted, whether there would be any sufficient foundation of common thought and experience. After all, 'the laity' means anyone, of any Christian allegiance, except the relatively few clergy. Could they bring any concrete question to a clear issue or even respond usefully to a specific lead ? Bad Boll suggests a double answer to this. On the one hand, we have seen that such a general, unspecialised conference can be richly rewarding, and there will be

room and recurrent need for others like it. On the other hand, Bad Boll went some way to confirm and clarify the original misgiving. For it was most coherent when it was least 'lay.' As Miss Batten observed from the platform, she doubted if the audience before her was quite as 'lay' as it looked; and in fact though there were few ordained clergy, the number occupied in works ancillary to the Churches and in higher education was large in proportion to the representatives of industry and commerce. Naturally therefore, the clearest lead and response was forthcoming in questions that interested the existing ecumenical organizations, including the question of European unity."

"The Biblical Basis

For fairly obvious reasons, the continental Protestant Churches, when they get together, tend rather to concentrate anew on their common foundations than seek to draw the up-to-date consequences from them. This is one reason for the very special prominence given to Bible study in ecumenical meetings such as the present conference. Our non-Catholic brethren on the Continent are far more conscious of dependence on their tradition of Bible study as a common discipline. One of the things that the British deputation wished to put on record, when they held a meeting near the end of the proceedings, was how much they were impressed by the value of this study, which went on every day in bilingual groups of about a dozen or fifteen. Constant reference to the canonical scriptures common to the entire Church establishes contact, it brings to light the underlying unities between Christians of different communities and countries, in a way that must be experienced to be believed. In this its value outweighs the very considerable differences of interpretation of which one saw signs, for instance, in a special study group devoted to the position of the Bible in the light of modern knowledge. Here there were no absolute 'fundamentalists,' but there seem to be many engaged in practical Bible-teaching who still think that any use of modern critical methods is just looking for trouble. On the other hand, there is a fresh wind blowing—the modern historical interpretation of the Bible as the record of the action of God in the concrete events of world history—this is gaining ground, and it is a liberating force, surely a re-emphasis upon what must always have been the essential interpretation."

(Oxford: *The Frontier*, September 1951.)

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"It was inevitable that political questions should come up on the day when, under the general title of 'Dangers and Rediscovery of Man,' they discussed the enslavement of man in the machinery of the totalitarian state, and demonstrated its dangerous similarity to the situation in the democratic world. Bishop Lilje showed how the greatest possible freedom, intellectual in origin, could lead to the greatest possible lack of freedom when based on the purely autonomous thinking of the totalitarian state of modern times. The rôle of technical science and its danger for man was described by the French scholar, Professor Ellul, whilst Dr. Heinemann and Pastor Finet (editor of the French weekly, *Réforme*) dealt most concretely with the question of Christian responsibility in modern mass-society dependant on scientific and political development.

It would surely be a misunderstanding, and one to which the Berlin Kirchentag has already been exposed, if this were to be regarded in worldly terms as some sort of Church underground movement. This was not the case at Bad Boll, nor will it be in further co-operation between the lay movements in the different countries and churches. Of intrinsic value was the strength of determination to offer unpretentious service, of help in all the centres of real need in this troubled world. And let us not forget that every uncovering of the immense strength of the churches, every plan for welfare or social service on a larger scale, is only effective if those who do this service have first rediscovered their immediate neighbours, sharing their everyday life and work in their respective social sphere."

(Basle: *Basler Nachrichten*, July 28/29, 1951.)

"The very fact that every side of European church life was represented here entitled me to hope that new powers, beyond those already existing, would come out of the Bad Boll Conference. Here too, one felt the impact of the Berlin Kirchentag most clearly. Those who possess these new powers, facing the 'tepid' atmosphere of a self-sufficient community, and unafraid of the coldness of modern mass society, find it a help to realise the benefits of their experience in the search for ways of reaching their fellowmen with the Gospel. In this way, ecumenism, too often seeming to be only a matter for a narrow circle of ecclesiastical 'worthies' and specialists, can be firmly established at the level of the parish and small centre of laymen's work. However, the promise, if one may call it that, of the 1951 Laymen's Conference lies in the above-mentioned directions, leading out into the world from the Biblical basis of religion. That this alone can lead to a Christian way of life, without degenerating into a humanitarian existence, was certainly a general conviction at Bad Boll, and found its expression in the deeply religious background of the life of the conference."

(Bethel-Bielefeld : *Evangelische Welt*,
August 16th, 1951.)

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"The French industrialist P. Lebailly treated the subject 'Man's Responsibility in the Social and Occupational Realm.' To my mind he looked at this problem in a one-sided way on the basis of his own country. And so he did not tell us anything new, neither did he deal with the problem and necessity for social organisations; hence the question of the rights and duties of Christian Trade-Unionism, as recognised in Holland (and which we want to recognise, even if we make mistakes), was never mentioned. The speaker quoted from Karl Marx that workers 'are the product of the new era,' and added that Jesus Christ, long before Marx, challenged man to renewal of life. But in this way one does not create Christian social relationship, and on this basis it becomes impossible to preach justice and righteousness which God commands in His Word, and which includes our whole life, including the life of society.

... As might be expected of a Lay Conference, this lecture of M. Lebailly was thoroughly debated, and the discussion groups especially went into the question of the personal liberty of the Christian with regard to his 'responsibility in his professional and social relations.' This was rather natural, since the speaker had argued that, although the Bible says that we must obey the government, this did not apply when we came to the conclusion that the laws and orders of governments were contrary to the Gospel. In the course of discussion it was clear that such personal liberty was considered dangerous, since everyone could then use his own discretion."

(Rotterdam : *De Rotterdammer*, July 24th, 1951.)

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"The French delegation took part seriously in the Conference, but also in very good humour. The fresh angle which it brought to the deliberations may be summarised as follows: a clarity and very definite reality, such as was given to the sketch on the world of technics by M. J. Ellul, and also in the witness of M. P. Lebailly; lucidity, and carefulness to be concrete; and finally it must be said, richness of experience. We moan about our shortcomings sufficiently to allow us for once to underline the importance of A.P.P. or A.F.P., of Cimade, and of the attempts of Pastor de Tienda at evangelism through the medium of the cinema.

... What more can be said, except that the Conference seemed to mark the beginnings of a great movement where the essentials of certain prophetic affirmations of the last century (we are thinking of *Christianisme Social*), which the Church has been slow to hear, are at last being absorbed. This is thought of as a 'biblical renewal.'

At the same time, none of the ideas aired at Bad Boll were new to most people. That is a fact. The problem which remains is that this missionary calling of the laity

should become a concrete fact which is felt in the Churches ; for the laity have discovered that witness is not solely a matter for the clergy. And for this end we must now pray and work."

(Paris : *Foi et Vie*, Nov.-Dec. 1951.)

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"At its closing session, the British Council of Churches was addressed by Professor Michael Foster, Miss E. M. Batten, and Mr. A. J. Bryant, who had all attended the European Laymen's Conference at Bad Boll in July. In the course of the discussion which ensued it became clear that while there was a resurgence of life in many of the lay movements within the Churches of this country, there was no general agreement as to the methods by which this should be fostered ecumenically. It was agreed that an *ad hoc* group should be appointed to explore the present position and to advise the Council on any action that it might usefully take."

(London : *The Church in the World*,
Oct.-Nov. 1951.)

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"Again from the Central Committee meeting at Rolle came fresh concern about the work of laymen in the Church, after the reading of a report on the Bad Boll Conference. Continental Churches, it might almost be said, hardly know what to do with their laymen, and there are stirrings of the heart about it, specifically directed to the layman's part in evangelism and witness in daily life and work. When the matter came before the council, in a report from British representatives to Bad Boll, a well-timed intervention by the Rev. E. Benson Perkins, M.A., on the great part played by Christian Laity in British Churches, led the Council to appoint an *ad hoc* group to explore the present position in regard to laymen and lay women and to advise the Council on any action it might usefully take..."

(London : *The Methodist Recorder*, Nov. 1st, 1951.)

AN AMERICAN OBSERVES THE EUROPEAN LAYMEN'S CONFERENCE

The Bad Boll conference was for my wife and me a high point in our European trip. It was here that we had an intimate glimpse of the new vigor, vision, and vitality of the laity of the European church.

Here were 220 people devoutly trying to find ways to relate Christianity to fundamental life situations. For the European laity, life has many involvements. Thus questions beyond the morals and meaning of vocation had to be discussed.

The conference was seeking to help laymen rediscover themselves and their Christian faith in the midst of the complex tensions of a society torn by a world social revolution. This became all the more real when the titanic struggle of two great and opposing ideologies was realistically faced.

Such was the context within which we prayed, studied, discussed, and communed. Any conference takes on a desperate urgency when its members, as many of our colleagues did, recount experiences in which the real question is, "Shall I risk everything for my convictions?" We recognized that we were involved in issues which might eventually mean life or death for individuals and principles.

Against this backdrop, we can begin now to appreciate what Bad Boll really was and meant.

We can say, on the one hand, that an attempt was made to cover too much territory, especially in the area of highly controversial political and social issues. The plenary sessions and the parliamentary procedures were poor. Non-lay officials of the sponsoring organization usurped to a large measure the public forum. Too little time was devoted to the questions involved in the laymen's occupational role and the meaning of Christianity for these questions.

But, on the other hand, we can say that we did plumb a new depth in our search for reality. We did see laymen expressing a genuine concern about relating the gospel of Jesus Christ to vocational and social-economic problems in the face of a lack of official support from their own churches. We did get a grand opportunity to converse freely with many people from different places and backgrounds. We did become part of a rich spiritual experience, with the Bible pivotal in the studies and worship. We did see a Biblical and doctrinal literacy uncommon in American church life. We did witness 220 people dedicating themselves to understand one another in a spirit of Christian love, despite the vivid memory of years in which hatreds were hot and blood flowed freely.

Bad Boll is a guidepost for future and better efforts for similar conferences on both sides of the Atlantic. We hope the North American Lay Conference on The Christian and His Daily Work, to be convened in February, 1952, at Buffalo, New York, will be as vital and will accomplish as much.

A. DUDLEY WARD.

THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE AND WITHIN US

CONCLUDING REPORT ON BIBLE STUDY AT THE EUROPEAN LAYMEN'S CONFERENCE*

General Remarks

All the groups were in agreement as to the importance of this work. Some of them stressed the value of the presence of the Orthodox members and the deep impression that was made by their witness, especially with regard to the community. On the other hand, an Orthodox said what an unexpected discovery this first-hand contact with the Scriptures had been for him. But he also observed that there were varying opinions and that they all seemed to him to be limited when he compared them with the Orthodox fulness.

"We are amazed," said a member of the Conference, "that people coming from such different countries should feel the same respect (*Ehrfurcht*) and the same joy in studying the Bible." "What impressed me," said another, "is that Christian responsibility was described with all its implications in such a personal manner."

Another noted that the element running right through our studies had been the *reality of the Holy Spirit*. "Our poverty is great. But Christ lives. He is greater than our poverty." "It is during these Bible studies," said another, "that we made our 'rediscovery of man'."

One of the participants found this study of the Book of Acts to be of such fundamental value that he expressed the hope that all would continue it when they returned home, interest other laymen in it, and send their conclusions to their Bad Boll group-leaders.

Let us now turn to the actual subjects.

The Missionary Vocation of the Church

The missionary vocation of the Church is not so much the justification for its existence, but rather its essential function. The Church is placed "between the times," that is, between the time of the Incarnation and the time of the final Fulfilment. The time of the Church is that of the great *assembling*, it announces the kingdom which is to come and this waiting gives meaning to all its activity. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Math. 24: 14). The Anglican members reminded us that the first mission of the Church is to worship God and

* See the remarks on Bible Study in the General Report of the Conference.

to serve Him. The Church's existence is justified by the love with which it is loved : "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it" and its vocation is to respond to this love. But it is through the witness that it bears in the midst of the world that it manifests the reality of its love and obedience. The two are inseparable.

The groups do not seem to have entered sufficiently into the implications of the missionary vocation of the Church for *each member* in his own particular situation. Moreover, each individual witness should be seen as being part of a wider perspective, the coming of the kingdom. Specialisation is inevitable : I am responsible for the particular place, family, occupation, country in which God has placed me. But I should not forget that God's workshop is the world. My task is part of the great work of salvation which He is operating throughout the whole world ; I should see this task in its humble proportions. God's gift to our age, through the Ecumenical Movement, is specifically that of broadening our horizons. My concern should not be just my own little piece of work, but *God's cause, the kingdom of God.*

What is a witness ?

A member of the Conference defined a witness in the following way : "A witness is a man who has received consolation, who has realised that he needs consolation but cannot give it to himself, and that it has been given to him by the grace which is in Jesus Christ ; he accepts this grace and wishes to share it with his neighbour."

This definition expresses a profound reality. The Christian is someone who is poor, who recognises his poverty and to whom God gives consolation. Anyone who knows himself can no longer live except with this consolation. It is in absolute poverty that the riches of Jesus Christ are revealed.

But the witness of the New Testament knows more than a personal consolation ; he is the witness of a fact that changes the face of the world and the face of history : the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Confronted with depressed, sceptical and defeatist Europeans who are inclined to accept the fate of history, we must be *Europeans living in consolation* because we live beneath the sign of the risen Christ. The Christian knows that it is within God's power to give back life to the dry bones ; "...there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone" (Ez. 37 : 7). Is not such a shaking going on today in the Confessing Churches of the East ? What hidden spiritual resources are there not today in Russia and other places where we do not suspect their existence ? Western Europe is being reborn materially, it is being covered with sinews and flesh, but the Spirit seems to be strangely lacking. Will it be for the Church to pass the life-giving breath of the Spirit which raises the dead over this sick Europe ? It alone can do so.

Jesus Christ, the Lord

We Christians proclaim the Lordship of a crucified God. To a world which believes in power, success and efficiency we proclaim a God who divests Himself of all His prerogatives, is made man and the servant of men and accepts apparent failure in allowing Himself to be put to death. The whole scandal of the Gospel

lies there, and the whole secret of its power. It is the miracle of love which humbles itself and gives itself without measure. We have too often concealed the mystery of this love beneath dry dogmatic and legal formulas.

Let us admit it : there is so much misery and suffering in the world that our faith in a good and all-powerful God is sometimes in danger of wavering. If God exists, He can be none other than the God of Jesus Christ, the God Who suffers Himself to be crucified by men. The Church will recover the power which it had in the first century according to the measure in which it accepts, following the example of its Lord, to be the Servant of men, the Church under the Cross, with no other weapons than those of love. The secret of power rests for it also in the acceptance of the Cross.

To acknowledge that Christ is Lord is again to acknowledge His sovereignty over *the world* and the cosmic significance of His sacrifice and victory. It implies recognising that no realm of life is unknown to Him or outside His jurisdiction. As laymen, it is very important for us to think this over : everyone will be responsible before God for the way in which he has carried out his public duties or those of his occupation. But God in His mercy gives us as Judge Him Who was made man in order to take upon Himself all the miseries of men, Him Who lived our life and "knows" of what we are made.

The Christian community

This subject seems to have been the one which, in all the groups, gave rise to the most fruitful discussions. Several groups stressed the inseparable nature of the four elements mentioned in Acts (Acts 2 : 42-47), teaching (doctrine), fellowship breaking of bread, prayer. The doctrine is only true if we live in fellowship ; we cannot partake of the same Sacrament of Holy Communion and ignore each other in daily life. What a matter for thought in most of our parishes !

A fifth element was stressed, the miracles. Where the Church lives and prays, there God works His miracles, although they may not necessarily be of a spectacular nature. In some Churches today a return is being made to the practice of the laying on of hands for the healing of the sick. But the miracle may have quite different forms ; as an example, a case has been quoted of reconciliation between two parties during a strike.

The discussions within the groups often touched on the state of our parishes today — the lifelessness of the message, the absence of a true community of spirit, the lack of co-operation between clergy and laymen. We excel in diagnoses. But it is no use studying the Acts if we do not draw from this study certain consequences for our own parish life. "Brethren, what shall we do?" It would be interesting if in a year's time the members of the Conference were to say what changes this study of Acts has brought into the community of which they are members.

Do we really believe that the prayers of two or three of its faithful members can bring about the awakening and the transformation of a parish ? One of the most important questions is that of the diversity of ministries corresponding to the diversity of gifts, of the active participation of all members in the life and apostolate of the Church. We are still at the beginning of this whole effort of research and thought.

The Church in conflict with the authorities

"We profoundly believe," states one report, "that when a human being is threatened, the Church is attacked." In other words, the defence of the person as person is part of the patrimony of the Church as being the community willed by God, in which each member is in the service of all and respects the other as being a child of God. The conflict may be of different kinds : in the Acts it confronts the Apostles with the established ecclesiastical authorities ; persecution comes in the first place from these authorities, then, in certain cases through repercussion from the secular authorities, and finally from the masses who believe that they are defending their interests in resisting the new faith. It should be noted that this tension between the Church and the world is in the New Testament regarded as being in the nature of things, as being a part, if I may say so, of the business of being a Christian !

Closed doors and open doors

We notice throughout history that when a community has acquired a certain cohesion it tends to become closed, and that is true of religious communities. Their exclusivism may be of an ecclesiastical, theological, social, national or racial nature. There is something of all this in the instinctive exclusivism of the first Jewish-Christian community in Jerusalem. For its doors to be opened and its hinges broken, nothing less is needed than the great wind of the Holy Spirit, which brings the heathen by force into the Church. Nothing less than the first great persecution and the first dispersion is needed to inaugurate the evangelisation of the world. When our doors do not open from within God breaks them open from without.

Is this not still the case today ? It is thanks to the political crisis of these last thirty years, and to the "Orthodox dispersion," that the West has begun to open itself to the treasures of the Orthodox faith and worship. God makes use of our enemies to put antiquated institutions in order, to stir up the peoples, races and confessions in labour and concentration camps, to force the Christians to leave their ivory tower and come down into the arena. And we should thank Him for this.

Let us rejoice that we live in difficult times. The atmosphere of the Acts is more familiar to us than it was to our fathers. Events force us to pray to God to send us His Holy Spirit as there is no longer any other solution. The hour of impossibilities and human deprivations may be, I say *may* be, the hour of God.

Let us proclaim the resurrection. Let us preach consolation. Let us be joyful. Let us be confident. That is the great lesson of the Book of Acts : that is the witness which the world needs — a Christianity which in the midst of disaster sings to the praise of God.

SUZANNE DE DIÉTRICH

BOSSEY NEWS 1951-1952

Will the old "Bosseyans" recognise the "Château" of their memories? The "Napoleonic" era has been closed: gone the pictures, gone the "Empire" furniture. The twelfth-century tower seems to be the only immovable feature of all the buildings. Pastor Henriod's crumbling chalet has become a very smart modern building, the *Dépendance* has been rebuilt, the Château is undergoing drastic interior transformations, the *Musée* has a plain white ceiling and a Chapel is to be built where the *Pressoir* stands at the moment. The rebuilding was started in February 1951 and if all goes well will be finished by March 1952. The Chapel, we hope, will be built in the course of the spring and summer of 1952. And in the autumn we hope to invite old and new friends to "come and see"! A few lovely gifts have already been received from various countries and from individual students which will add a personal note to the somewhat impersonal buildings. The Château has been closed for nearly a year but the staff of the Ecumenical Institute have not been idle. In January Professor Kraemer started on an important five months' tour in Pakistan, India, Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and Indonesia. This tour involved a great deal of lecturing and consultations with Church leaders and Missionaries; one of the definite purposes of the trip was to encourage the development of laymen's work in the Younger Churches, and India has already requested the Institute to hold a three months' Laymen's Training Course in India in a not too distant future.

Bossey activities have been partly maintained but transferred to other places. A Conference on the responsibility of the Church towards morally and socially abandoned youth took place in Bossey in January; a Conference of Biologists and Theologians at Bièvres (France) in late March; three short Courses for Laymen in Berlin in April; a Conference for men and women in industry on the responsibility of Christian managers towards human relations within the process of production at Bièvres in June. The greatest performance of the year, which involved a great deal of preparation, was the European Laymen's Conference in Bad Boll, July 16-27, about which the present Bulletin gives full information. A three weeks' Course for Theological Students took place in Woudschoten (Holland) in August. It had been hoped that the Courses which followed, a two weeks' Course for Theological Students and Young Laymen and a two weeks' Course for Missionaries on Furlough, would take place at Bossey, but they had to be transferred to Gwatt, on the Lake of Thun. A Conference on the non-theological factors in the problem of reunion was held in Bossey this November.

Reports on all the Conferences mentioned above are available on request. It will be noticed that some appear as a new feature on our Bossey Calendar (the Biologists) while others are a further step in an ongoing process. Thus, the Conference on morally abandoned youth was an outcome of the 1950 Conference of Social Workers and part of a study that is being continued. It is hoped that in the spring or summer of 1952 a group of experts will meet at Bossey for a longer period and, in the light of a questionnaire already sent to a number of welfare

workers, will be able to draft a document for the use of the Churches on the whole matter of the responsibility of the Church in the realm of welfare work in the new situation which has arisen from the development of the Welfare State.

The Conference of men and women in industry held at Bièvres was the third of its kind. We met with the practical difficulty that half the leading businessmen who had registered were, at the last moment, prevented from coming. We are faced in the world of industry with problems that are so vast and complex that the need was felt for further consultation with a team of experts before any large-scale programme is launched ; this consultation is to take place in January 1952 and will, we hope, lead to a larger Conference later in the year (May 30-June 3).

The problems of Education, both in secular and religious schools and institutions, occupied our attention at three successive meetings during the early years of the Institute's activity. They have recently been left somewhat in the background. An important consultation on Religious Education is now planned for August 1952. Its aim is to study the place, scope and spirit of Christian education in present-day society and the responsibility of the Churches and of private Christian initiative in view of the present relationship between Church, State and School.

The Conference on Birth Control to be held in March 1952 is a follow-up of the Conference on the Family held in March 1950. It will consist of a very small group of experts and it is intended as a preparation for the second more extensive Conference on the Family to be held in 1953.

All the Conferences mentioned above are part of an *ongoing process*.

The Conference of Journalists to be held in March 1952 is intended especially for those who work in the secular press. Here we cannot speak in quite the same way of an "ongoing process," in spite of the fact that this meeting will be the second of its kind held at Bossey. Two of the main themes to be discussed are a) The East-West Relationships and b) The Freedom and Responsibility of the Press.

The Conference on Art, also the second of its kind, will have as its main theme "Art and the Crisis of Culture" (May 1952).

As is the case every year, the Ecumenical Institute hopes to explore some *new avenues* in 1952. There will be a Conference of Psychotherapists, Psychoanalysts and Theologians which was to have taken place this autumn and had to be postponed to next March. It will be centred on the understanding of man from the point of view of modern psychiatry and psychotherapy and from the Christian point of view.

Another new feature of the programme will be the Conference for Practising Lawyers of the Younger Generation to be held in April 1952. The four main themes on the programme are : 1) causes of the present crisis in Law and means of overcoming it ; 2) the significance of the Biblical message for the legal world ; 3) the Church's attitude to the problem of law ; 4) the significance of the Christian faith for the lawyer in the daily practice of his profession. Some of these practical problems will be tackled in study-groups.

Among the less specialised Conferences and Courses planned for 1952, three are of interest from the point of view of Laymen's Work :

a) *The Conference of Leaders of Men's Movements in the Church*

This is the first of its kind, as far as we know, on an international scale ; its main emphasis will be on : i) the witness of the Christian in his daily life and work ; ii) the missionary activity which these organisations can develop.

b) *The Course for Laymen*

This course is conceived as a general introduction to the Ecumenical Movement and more specifically to those activities of the World Council of Churches which are of direct concern for laymen. A large part of the time will be given to Bible Study and to Discussion groups.

c) *The Course for Young Laymen and Women in junior managerial posts and other technical professions*

This course is also meant to provide a general introduction to the Ecumenical Movement but will include some lectures on the specific problems at stake in the realm of human relationships in industry.

The Courses for Ministers and Theological Students are a recurrent feature of the Institutes's life. However, with the authorisation of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, the Institute now plans to start on a quite new venture in the autumn of 1952 : a Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies is to be opened at Bossey under the auspices of the World Council of Churches and the Faculty of Theology of Geneva. The studies will cover a full semester (October to February) and will be of University standing. It is hoped that not only students of Theology but also Arts and Law students will avail themselves of this opportunity of ecumenical training.

SUZANNE DE DIÉTRICH.

A full time-table of the courses and conferences mentioned by M^{lle} de Diétrich is given in the "Calendar" at the end of this Bulletin. May we, in passing, remind our readers that applications for the Bossey Courses should be sent to the National Correspondents of the Institute in each country? For *Conferences* please send enquiries and applications to the Secretariat of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, par Céligny, Switzerland. For further information on the *Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies* please write to the Director of the Institute, Prof. H. Kraemer.

PLANNING FOR BUFFALO

The churches of the United States and of Canada are joining in a conference devoted to the responsibility of lay people in the opportunities and relationships of the daily work through which they earn their livelihood (housewives are included). In the Call signed by the presidents of the convening bodies, the objective of the conference were stated as follows :

“To see more clearly the value and significance of daily work as Christian vocation ; to discover how Christians should make the decisions, meet the requirements, and conduct themselves in the relationships of their occupations ; to learn what the Church can do to help Christians, as individuals and as members of groups, toward (1) an understanding of and commitment to Christian vocation, (2) making their daily work a demonstration of their Christian witness, (3) providing effective leadership for a more Christian social order through the decisions and relationships of their occupations.”

The invitations to the conference have been extended to over 40 church bodies with requests for the appointment of delegates, which it is expected will number around 350. Quotas were proposed for each church body with emphasis on the preponderance of lay delegates.

The morning of the conference will be given to talks on various aspects of the Christian and his daily work. The first day will include two addresses by a leading American theologian on the Christian meaning of work and its relevance to work today. On the second day, four lay people will speak to the issues and problems which they confront as Christians in terms of their particular occupations. The third day will have talks by two clergymen and two laymen on what the churches should be doing to help their lay members into an understanding and practice of Christian vocation.

A second major part of the schedule will have the delegates divided into small groups. For a greater length of time the delegates will be divided into groups according to their occupations, where the challenge of Christian living in daily work will be faced in terms of the specific character of a particular occupation.

The conference will be led in a series of worship services by a Canadian church leader. Of special help to the conference will be the leadership of Reinold von Thadden who is visiting the United States especially for the North American Lay Conference. Dr. von Thadden is to address the conference on two occasions. The concluding day of the conference will be spent in plenary session in discussing and approving the statement and report of the conference.

The delegates to the conference will have materials from the special Study by the Department of the Church and Economic Life of the National Council of Churches dealing with the relation of Christian ethics to economic life. They will have also a booklet prepared especially for the conference on *The Christian at His Daily Work*.

CAMERON P. HALL.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

By a pleasing coincidence which may be of deeper significance, the First Roman Catholic "World Congress for the Lay Apostolate" was held in Rome (October 7-14) in the same year as the first European Laymen's Conference under the auspices of the World Council of Churches and the German Evangelical Kirchentag in Berlin. We should never be forgetful of the fact that a new vision of the gift and the task of the laity in the Church is something which exceeds the limitations of the unhappily divided Christian Community. To say that the Roman Catholic Church is in some respects ahead of all that we know on lay movements in non-Roman Christianity is a mere tribute to the truth. In laying theological foundations and in applying the lay apostolate to certain special milieux, we can learn a great deal from modern Roman Catholicism. This does not prevent us from seeing the fundamental differences, which exist in the conception of the lay apostolate no less than in other fields.

The topics lectured on and discussed in Rome were: "The World of Today and the Lay Apostolate," "Doctrinal Foundation of the Lay Apostolate," "The Formation of Laymen for the Lay Apostolate," "The Formation of a Christian Social Order" and "The Presence and Responsibilities of Catholics in International Life." An extract follows from the "General Conclusions" reached by the Congress:

"God's Plan. The Apostolate of the Laity is foreseen and willed by God in His plan of redemptive love. God created the world and redeemed it from sin through His incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, Who continues His presence and mission in and through the Church which He founded and which He animates by His spirit. It is He Who has instituted a Church hierarchical in nature for the edification of His Mystical Body, in order that all members, each in his place, may collaborate in the growth of the Body through faith and charity (cf. Eph. iv, II sq.). The laity in the Church, faithful to their vocation as the people of God, will fulfil their task by collaborating with the Hierarchy in the salvation of souls and by working to promote in the world conditions of temporal life adapted to the Church's redemptive mission. Thus is realized the Divine intention of restoring all things in Christ.

"Mission of the Laity. The Apostolate of the laity, guided by the Hierarchy, derives from their belonging to the Mystical Body of Christ, from the Sacrament of Confirmation, from the divine charity infused in each one by the Holy Spirit and from the social requirements of Christianity. It presupposes that every Christian knows and admits in fact that Christianity does not consist only in carrying out one's religious duties in certain given circumstances, but in living by the grace of the Christ the life of the Church at every moment and in each one of our actions. This Apostolate consists in the first place in leading men, with full respect for their liberty, towards the truth and love of Christ; it also implies the propagation of the evangelical principles and spirit in the human structures of the temporal order. Here above all the rôle of the layman is irreplaceable.

"Urgency of this Apostolate. The conditions of the present moment call more imperiously than ever for this Apostolate of the laity. The increase and unification of the population of the globe, scientific, technical and cultural progress, the ever more comprehensive and complex structures which they call into being and finally materialism and

all the false ideologies which aspire to a totalitarianism destructive of the human person and the human family, these are so many factors calling for the active presence of lay apostles in all sectors of modern life.

"Diversity and Unity. The Apostolate of the laity, both individual and organized, can, and does in fact, present a great multiplicity of forms, according to the type of organization adopted (parish, milieu, etc.), according to its field of activity (specifically religious action, charitable activity, cultural, social and civic action, etc.) and according to the mode of its dependence on the Hierarchy. However various its forms, the Apostolate of the laity, expression of the charity of the Church, remains nevertheless one in its source and its finality. This unity therefore calls for fraternal collaboration between all and an appropriate co-ordination of their efforts.

"Formation. To be faithful to their vocation, lay people have absolute need of an adequate formation, in which the priest's ministry is an indispensable factor and which it is the duty of the organizations themselves to ensure. This formation must be such that the more gifted among them may be able to assume responsibilities of leadership. First and foremost, they will maintain a lively desire for evangelical perfection, which is communion with God in faith, hope and love. They will seek to promote, within as outside the family, a religious education calculated to give the child, according to its capacities, an understanding of the greatness of the gift of God, and they will endeavour to acquire a doctrinal formation corresponding to their state in life. They will participate with an ever more enlightened awareness in the Church's liturgical prayer and sacramental life. Having in the Virgin Mary, Queen of Apostles, a perfect example of the creature docile to the call of God and filled with a plenitude of the grace of Christ, they will aspire under her protection to an ever deeper spiritual life. Looking upon her, they will be able to understand the apostolic value of contemplation and suffering. In order that this inner life, source and condition of all Apostolate, may have its full efficacy, they will take care to know the methods of apostolate best adapted to the milieux in which their activity is exercised. To be in a position to bear an integral and effective Christian witness, and in this way to promote the true progress of humanity, they will make a point of possessing an ever more undoubted professional competence. They must be ready to use fully and intelligently all the positive contributions of modern technical invention (Press, cinema, radio, television) for the diffusion of the Gospel message. What our age most needs is to see the unification, in the light of Christian wisdom, of the various branches of culture, a task which calls for the harmonious union of competence and faith.

"Social Order. One of the most urgent undertakings at the present moment, and one which the Church can accomplish above all through the action of the laity, is also the inauguration of a truly Christian economic and social world. An order in which the 'human person will be recognized as foundation, end and subject' (Christmas Broadcast of Pius XII, 1941), and where its essential rights will find a concrete possibility for their affirmation and development. It is important to consider with particular solicitude the plight of those who are most abandoned and to seek solutions for the crucial problems of our time : a juster distribution of material resources, housing hygiene, social security, participation in the benefits of culture, a responsible and active presence in the economic field and in public life. The family must be given conditions favourable to its stability and development, and woman must keep, or must be given back if lost, the possibility of accomplishing her mission as wife and mother and of exercising her economic function within the family.

"International Order. The solution of the major economic and social problems will be found more and more on the international level. It is therefore necessary for Catholics courageously to assume their responsibilities in this field. They will consequently participate in the life of the existing organizations and institutions in order to

ensure within them the presence of the Christian leaven. They will work for the development of the Catholic International Organizations, whose rôle is to give an authentic expression of Christian viewpoints, especially to international organisms of all kinds. They will endeavour to stimulate 'vocations' and to give Catholics desirous of working on the international level a formation which will ensure for them undoubted competence.

"Appeal To All. The Congress, with unanimous voice, renewing the expression of its sentiments of filial gratitude to the Holy Father and to the Hierarchy, reiterates, in these exceptional circumstances, unfailing loyalty to the supreme Pastor, to all the Bishops and to the priests who are their representatives. It addresses a solemn appeal :

To all Catholics, inviting them to sacrifice themselves unreservedly in Christ's service by participating in an ever more personal and living manner in the Apostolate of His Church in view of a mission of charity, light and peace ;

To all Christians, to whatever denomination they may belong, to all those who believe in a transcendent God intervening through love in human history, that all may join in affirmation of the imprescriptible rights of God and in generous accomplishment of His Will, in public as in private life ;

To all men of good will, anxious to safeguard the integrity of the human person and respect for its destiny, in order to maintain and promote in a temporal order based on natural law the primacy of spiritual values ;

To all, the World Congress for the Lay Apostolate addresses a fraternal appeal, inviting them to work together on these bases for the institution of a truly human international community, the indispensable condition for any hope of peace."

INTER-CHURCH AID : ECUMENICAL STEWARDSHIP

Inter-Church Aid is basic to the life of the Ecumenical Movement, because it is the visible expression of genuine fellowship in Christian sharing. This ecumenical stewardship provides a *raison d'être* for the World Council of Churches in a dramatic way which laymen can easily understand and appreciate.

When the Apostle Paul advised the Church at Philippi, "Let each member think not only of his own needs, but rather on the needs of others," (Phil. 2 : 4) he was expressing the fundamental principles underlying modern Inter-Church Aid.

The real Biblical basis for the work of Inter-Church Aid rests upon a growing awareness within Christian churches around the world that each is a part of the Body of Christ (I Cor. 12 : 26) ; and that when one Member suffers, all of the Members suffer. Thus, Inter-Church Aid under the World Council of Churches is designed "to further, on an ecumenical basis, all practical help which churches may extend to each other."

Though the term may have a new sound to the ears of many laymen, Inter-Church Aid is not something "new" in the life of the Christian Church. It has, in fact, existed from the time of the Apostolic Church. One of the earliest-known accounts of such action can be found in Acts 11 : 27-30, which tells how Christians at Antioch were once moved by the spirit of stewardship to share of God's overflowing blessings to them on behalf of their less-fortunate brethren in Jerusalem.

Organized Inter-Church Aid programs began following the Second World War, and vast quantities of food, clothing, relief supplies and money were channeled through Geneva to strife-wounded Christian churches all over Europe. Most of these gifts came and still come from laymen in small congregations all over the world.

After 1945, European Christians received aid to rebuild damaged and destroyed worship centers, receiving as replacements in many cases ecumenically-purchased "barrack churches." The famed *Notkirchen*, or "rubble churches," now serving German Christians were designed and built through ecumenical cooperation. Similarly, hospitals, orphanages, schools, homes for the aged and countless other church-operated institutions received beds, blankets, medicines and other needed supplies, enabling them to carry on their ministries of mercy.

Today, Inter-Church Aid under the WCC is designed not merely to restore what warfare destroyed, but rather to strengthen the churches and the leaders for the long-range tasks they must shoulder in the years that lie ahead.

For this reason, *aid to pastors* who will provide this leadership plays a prominent rôle in the program of the Inter-Church Aid department. In addition to sending supplies for their physical needs in the form of food and clothing, underpaid clergymen are receiving stipends for their salaries through gifts made by churches in other lands.

Other overworked churchmen, exhausted from heavy post-war tasks, are being invited to holiday rest homes in Switzerland, operated by the WCC. Pastors and priests with curable cases of tuberculosis receive treatment in Swiss sanatoria,

costs paid by the WCC's *health program*. Still other ailing clerics in East European countries, unable to come to Switzerland for cures, are receiving life-saving medicines unobtainable in their own countries.

To further the ecumenical ideal, a program of *exchanges of fraternal workers* is also conducted by the ICA department. Largely youthful volunteers, fraternal workers include deaconesses, youth leaders, evangelists, welfare and refugee workers and other specialists from foreign churches who are helping church life in Europe. As personal representatives of the aid which their own churches are providing, these fraternal workers are personalizing jobs which might have otherwise become parts of a great machine-like operation.

The WCC also operates a *scholarship program* for theological students. More than 900 future church leaders from Europe, Asia and America have already benefitted from study in church institutions of other denominations in other countries. This year, for example, 130 students from Anglican, Old Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant member churches of the WCC are enrolled in faculties in 11 different countries. Stemming from 20 nationalities and as many denominations, these students will strengthen ecumenical relations both during and following their periods of learning. This will be accomplished through self-criticism, plus deeper understanding of another church, which will also result in deeper loyalties toward their own churches.

The Laymen's Secretariat of the WCC is supported by Inter-Church Aid gifts, as is the program of Ecumenical Work Camps. During 1951, work camps included 867 young people from 33 nations who performed volunteer church construction work in 24 camps conducted in 11 countries.

Lastly, the WCC's Service to Refugees, operated on an Inter-Church Aid basis, has enabled more than 80,000 European refugees and displaced persons to find new homes in nearly three dozen countries around the world. This aspect of Inter-Church Aid, strategically important to the life of the whole Church, has seen assistance offered to members of Orthodox refugee churches in Western Europe, who had no other source from which they could anticipate aid.

J. A. RYBERG.

SOME ITEMS CONCERNING LAYMEN'S MOVEMENTS

The largest gathering of laity ever recorded in the history of the Protestant Church took place in Berlin in July 1951. At its closing meeting in the open Olympic Stadium 400,000 men and women were present from both sides of the iron curtain. We will not comment further here on this most significant event. It should, however, be observed that the Berlin Kirchentag has proved that the assembling of large numbers of Christians need not necessarily produce a herd mind, and that their refusal to be used for political party ends may create new political factors and even perhaps a new political situation. The Chairman of the Kirchentag, Dr. Reinold von Thadden, is also Chairman of the Board of the Ecumenical Institute, and in this capacity he represents Laymen's Work in an ecumenical perspective.

*

The Department of Christian Citizenship of the Methodist Church in Great Britain held a Laymen's Conference last May. 719 men enrolled. The subject to be dealt with was "The Church and the Christian in the Welfare State." A statement was adopted as follows :

"From our consideration of the problems of the Welfare State in the light of Christian faith, we go back to the places from whence we came": ... "More deeply convinced of the truth and relevance of Christian faith to common life." "Firmly determined to uphold the State in local and national government in so far as it provides the conditions of the good life, but on guard when it exceeds its limits or imperils man's inner liberty." "Conscious that we cannot achieve the good life within our own land if we do not seek to promote it among all nations."

A pamphlet has been produced in which a report on the Conference is given and the findings of the groups are published in full. Following up the Conference a two years' programme has been launched, dealing in 1951/52 with "Christianity and Human Relations in Industry," and in 1952/53 with "Christianity and the World's Work," culminating in a second Laymen's Conference in the Spring of 1953.

*

The Christian Frontier Council (Great Britain) held its annual Week-end Conference at Glyn House, Broadstairs, September 28-30. With Mr. Henry Brooke, M.P., in the chair the forty-odd participants discussed "Man in Industry." An account of the discussions and some of the papers read on that occasion are published in the November issue of *The Frontier*.

*

The *Reformierte Heimstätte* in Boldern, near Zurich, under the leadership of Hans J. Rinderknecht, recently called a meeting on "The Spiritual Basis of Socialism", attended by some 25 pioneer thinkers including such men as

M. André Philip, former Minister of the French Government, Prof. Banning, Holland, Dr. Théodore Bovet, Switzerland, and Dr. Eberhard Müller, Germany. Socialism, they said, is something which cannot be monopolised by any political party and which is not to be identified with Marxism though it owes some good insights into the structure of society to Karl Marx. The Minutes of the Meeting have been published. The group is to continue its work.

*

The "Record of Proceedings of the Montreal Presbytery of the United Church of Canada" (Vol. VI, May-June 1951) gives the full liturgical order of "a service of dedication to the teaching profession." As the preacher said to the Presbytery, this is probably the first service of its kind ever held. This is a practical contribution to the question of Church and Occupational Life.

*

At the annual *Congrès Postfédé* (former members of the Student Christian Movement) in France a statement was adopted from which we give the following extracts (translated from the *Bulletin du Centre de Documentation*, Paris, September 1951):

"To integrate the faithful with the work of the Church *does not mean to make them auxiliaries of the clergy*. On the contrary, the pastor is their advisor, guide and workmate, whether they take on ecclesiastical responsibilities or whether they witness primarily in the various secular spheres."

"Each Church is responsible to *its surroundings*. Within its community men and women of all ages and conditions live side by side. The Church is open to all and makes no discrimination. It has a function of mission and service to its surroundings."

"The Church is also expressed by the *fellowships* set up within it, between people from the same occupations or the same cultural background, or troubled by the same problems. The parish is, nevertheless, the natural meeting-place for all Christians."

*

A programme called "Churchmen's Washington Seminars" has been sponsored by five Protestant bodies in America. The growth of such seminars is a postwar phenomenon indicative of the interest in government affairs developing among Protestant groups. A vocational seminar "The Christian Farmer and Government" was held under the auspices of the Department of the Church and Economical Life of the National Council of Churches of Christ. Similar seminars for other walks of life are continually going on. A typical seminar programme includes a visit to both houses of Congress, to committee hearings and to the delegates' home state representatives. Talks are given by representatives of the various "church lobbies," by State Department speakers and Spokesmen for organisations such as trade unions, the Chamber of Commerce etc.

(*Religious News Service*)

*

A School of Practical Politics has been launched jointly by the Philadelphia Council of Churches and the Committee of Seventy, a non-partisan citizens' group for political reform.

It marked the first time that the local church council has taken an active step to promote the interest of church congregations in political action, according to the Rev. Dr. George Peters, Presbyterian, chairman of the project.

The "school" is being tried on a sectional basis with about 80 churches of Germantown—Mt. Airy—Chestnut Hill participating. Weekly seminars will train key persons who will be expected to form Christian citizenship—political action groups in their own congregations.

(*Religious News Service*)

*

The Evangelical Academy in Hamburg, Germany, has centred part of its 1950/51 programme on the conception of freedom. A printed record has now been issued dealing with the following sections: freedom as a problem in the economic structure; freedom in criminal law and in legal practice; freedom and civil liberties in the constitution of both Western and Eastern Germany; the principle of freedom in the European Revolution; freedom in art; freedom as a philosophical and theological problem.

*

Amongst the many papers being issued by the Dutch Institute *Kerk en Wereld* (some of them in English) there is an interesting record of the work of the Study Group on the Apostolate. Likewise the pamphlets on "The Christian Faith facing Modern Cultural Problems" open up new perspectives.

*

The Sociological Institute of the Dutch Reformed Church, which is unique of its kind, has produced a very short and readable prospectus, which includes an introduction into its work as well as a full list of articles published in *The Sociological Bulletin*, the regular organ of the Institute.

CALENDAR 1951-1952 *

ECUMENICAL

Ecumenical Institute in Bossey. *January* : 3-6 Consultation with a selected group of leaders in Laymen's Work ; 10-13 Consultative group on ways of approach to Industrial Problems. *March* : 1-4 Journalists' Conference ; 10-14 Consultative group on Birth-Control Problems ; 21-27 Conference of Psychotherapists, Psychoanalysts and Theologians. *April* : 3-8 Conference for practising lawyers of the younger generation. *May* : 3-8 Conference of Leaders of Men's Movements in the Church ; 14-21 Conference on Art and the Crisis of

Culture ; 30.5-3.6 Conference on the Christian attitude towards human relations in industry. *June* : 10-25 Course for Ministers. *July* : 3-12 Course for Laymen ; 14.7-4.8 Course for Theological Students. *August* : 8-15 Conference on Christian Education ; 24-31 Medical Conference (organised by Dr. Tournier). *September* : 3-10 Course for Young Laymen and Women in junior managerial posts and other laymen in technical professions. *October* 1952 - *February* 1953 : Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies.

Under the Joint Auspices of National Council of Churches of Christ in America and the Canadian Council of Churches at the request of the WCC. Buffalo, N.Y. February 21-24 : Regional Laymen's Conference. Theme : "The Christian and his Daily Work."

BRITAIN

Dons' Advisory Group. March : 27-31 Swanwick. Conference on "The Vocation of the University Teacher."

FRANCE

A.P.P. (Associations professionnelles protestantes), *January* : 26-27 Annual Weekend Meeting. Theme : "Economic, Social and Theological Aspects of Money."

NETHERLANDS

Woodbrookers Community Bentveld-Barchem. *November* : "Why Political Choice ?". "Social Security and Responsibility." *December* : 8-9 "Socialism and Liberty."

SWEDEN

Sigtuna Foundation. *September* : Church and Free Church Leaders on Mission and Ecumenism.

SWITZERLAND

Centre Protestant d'Études. *October-December* : "Panorama of Christianity." Themes : Orthodoxy. Anglicanism. Reformed Protestantism. Roman Catholicism. Lutheranism. Old Catholicism. Reformed Protestants in face of the Diversity of Churches. *March-February* : "Situation of the Layman in various Professions and Occupations."

* Further to the Calendar published in the first issue of this Bulletin.

GERMANY

Kirchentag. August : 27-31 Stuttgart. For all laymen of the EKdI and guests from abroad. Groups : Life in the Church. Life in the Family. Life in the Nation. Life and Work. Life in the Village.

Evangelical Academies

Bad Boll *December* : 13-16 Architects and Constructional Engineers; 17-22 Apprentices. *January* : 15-18 Workers and Industrial Administrators; 20-24 Nurses. *February* : 6-11 Farmers; 19-22 Young Workers. *March* : 4-30 Refresher Course of the Christian Press Academy. *April* : Social and Political Course. *May* : 1-4 Booksellers, Publishers and Librarians; 21-25 Industrialists; 26-30 Commercial and Technical Employees. *June* : Railway and Post-Office Clerks; Housewives.

Hermannsburg *October* : Doctors and Natural Scientists. *November* : "From the Function to the Person." *December* : 7-10 Farmers and Agriculturists; 13-17 Young Business Men and Industrialists. 1952 : *January* : 4-8 Training Officers for Industry and Artisan Occupations. *February* :

Workers and Employees. *March* : 13-17 Sportsmen and Sportswomen. *May* : "Experience, Insight and Faith" (Spiritual Striving for Faith); Journalists. *June* : Artists; Lawyers.

Hesse - Nassau. Schloss Assenheim. *January* : 12-13 Faith and the Natural Sciences; 19-20 The Beginning of Life (Weekend Conference for Doctors and Natural Scientists).

Bad-Orb. *January* : 3-6 Younger Generation; 11-13 Industrialists; 14-17 The Church and the Arts; 18-20 Doctors.

Tutzing. *October* : Man in a Rationalised Society. *November* : Baptism; Metaphysics of the Wireless. *December* : Problem of Ministers' Children; Prophecy. 1952 : *January* : 4-6 Myth; 18-21 Young Countrymen; 25-27 "Our Relationship to the State." *February* : 1-3 Rehabilitated Persons; 15-17 "The Freedom of Christians"; 22-25 "Our Body." *March* : 7-9 "Beyond Capitalism."

NOTE

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